

Adult Education and Literacy

WIOA Individuals with Barriers to Employment – Purpose and Definitions

Individuals with barriers to employment

- Displaced homemaker
- English Language Learner, low literacy levels, cultural barriers
- Exhausting TANF within two years
- Ex-offender
- Homeless/runaway youth
- Long-term unemployed
- Low income
- Migrant and seasonal farmworker
- Individuals with a disability
- Single parent
- Youth in foster care or aged out of system

Note that WIOA Section 3(24) also includes Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and older individuals (age 55 or older) as individuals with a barrier to employment. These groups will be included in the Federal reports through the demographic information.

Purpose of identifying barriers to employment

- Required by WIOA
- Participants with barriers may:
 - have difficulty obtaining employment and achieving other outcomes
 - have slower progress in WIOA-Funded programs
 - adversely affect performance indicators

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact:
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Definitions of Individual with Barriers to Employment

Element	Definition
<p>Displaced Homemaker WIOA Sec. 3(16)</p>	<p>Participant provides unpaid services to family members in the home and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; or • is the dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and whose family income is significantly reduced because of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a deployment or a call or order to active duty pursuant to a provision of law; ○ a permanent change of station; or ○ the service-connected death or disability of the member; and • is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
<p>English Language learners, low literacy levels, cultural barriers</p>	<p>(Applies to all Title II participants) Participant has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited ability in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language; • an inability to compute and solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the participant’s family, or in society; or • a perception of self as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs, or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting, or working that may serve as a hindrance to employment.
<p>Exhausting TANF Within 2 Years</p>	<p>The participant is within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, regardless of whether he or she is receiving these benefits at program entry.</p>
<p>Ex-Offender WIOA Sec. 3(38)</p>	<p>Participant has either (a) been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process for committing a status offense or delinquent act, or (b) requires assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction for committing delinquent acts, such as crimes against persons, crimes against property, status offenses, or other crimes.</p>
<p>Homeless or Runaway Youth</p>	<p>Homeless Participant:</p> <p>(a) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; (ii) Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations; (iii) Living in an emergency or transitional shelter; (iv) Abandoned in a hospital; or (v) Awaiting foster care placement. <p>(b) has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, such as a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station,</p>

	<p>airport, or camping ground</p> <p>Runaway Youth Participant is:</p> <p>(a) a migratory child who in the preceding 36 months was required to move from one school district to another due to changes in the parent’s or parent’s spouse’s seasonal employment in agriculture, dairy, or fishing work; or</p> <p>(b) under 18 years of age and absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission of his or her family (i.e., runaway youth).</p> <p>This definition does not include an individual imprisoned or detained under an Act of Congress or State law. An individual who may be sleeping in a temporary accommodation while away from home should not, as a result of that alone, be recorded as homeless.</p>
Long-Term Unemployed	The participant has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks at program entry.
<p>Low Income WIOA Sec. 3 (36)</p>	<p>Participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the 6 months prior to application to the program has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving assistance through the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) under the Food and Nutrition Act; ○ temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program under part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act; and/or, ○ supplemental security income (SSI) program under Title XVI of the Social Security Act or state or local income-based public assistance; • is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of the poverty line or 70% of the lower living standard income level; • is a youth who receives, or is eligible to receive a free or reduced price lunch; • is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; • is an individual with a disability whose own income is the poverty line (but may be a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement); • is a homeless individual or a homeless child or youth or runaway youth; or • is a youth living in a high-poverty area.
<p>Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker</p>	<p>Participant is a low-income individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who for the 12 consecutive months out of the 24 months prior to application for the program involved, has been primarily employed in agriculture or fish farming labor that is characterized by chronic unemployment or underemployment; and • faces multiple barriers to economic self-sufficiency; or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is a dependent of the person described above.
Individual with a Disability	Participant indicates that s/he has any disability, defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the person's major life activities (defined under the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.)
Single Parent	Participant is single, separated, divorced or a widowed individual who has primary responsibility for one or more dependent children under age 18 (including single pregnant women).
Youth in Foster Care or Aged out of System	Participant is currently in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system.

Additional tips

Please record **all the barriers** to employment in the above in DataWorks for each participant at entry (many will have multiple barriers).

Note that all participants will have at least the “English language learners, low levels of literacy, cultural barriers” barrier.

You may need to add more barriers to the student file as you get to know the student better, but do not delete barriers that the participant had at entry (unless you discover it was not accurate) if the barrier has been removed. For example, a participant who was “Long-Term Unemployed” at entry may obtain employment while receiving AEL services. In this case, you will not remove the barrier from the student file because the intention is to record the barriers *at program entry*. **However, a new program year is considered another program entry and the data must be updated then.**

AEL is responsible for recording this data once the participant has reached a PoP (12 hours of service). However, it is good practice to collect the data during intake and update it at the beginning of each program year.

Thank you!