

Guidance in WIOA Related to Career Pathways

WIOA Section 3 (7)

Career Pathway: A combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training and other services that —

- (A) **aligns with the skill needs of industries** in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- (B) **prepares an individual to be successful** in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an “apprenticeship,” except in section 171);
- (C) **includes counseling** to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;
- (D) **includes, as appropriate, education** offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- (E) **organizes education, training, and other services** to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- (F) **enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma** or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
- (G) **helps an individual enter or advance** within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Subtitle A – System Alignment, Chapter 1 – State Provisions – Sec. 101 State Workforce Development Boards

- Makes development of **career pathways** strategies a required function of the state and local workforce boards.
- Makes **career pathways** a permissible activity under all parts of the Act.

Combined or Unified State Plan

- One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers.
- WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B)(D) requires states to describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and **career pathways**. "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA Section 3(23).

Subtitle A – System Alignment, Chapter 2 – Local Provisions – Sec. 107 Local Workforce Development Boards

- (d) FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL BOARD. —
- (5) CAREER PATHWAYS DEVELOPMENT. — The local board, with representatives of secondary and postsecondary education programs, shall lead efforts in the local area to develop and implement **career pathways** within the local area by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

Subtitle A – System Alignment, Chapter 2 – Local Provisions – Sec. 108 Local Plan

The local plan shall include —

- (b)(3) a description of how the local board working with its partners will facilitate the development of **career pathways** and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential.
- Local areas are required to use youth funds to conduct an objective assessment for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and **career pathways** for participants.