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Youth Work Experience Policy

Work Experience is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. In addition to learning academic and occupational skills, a Work Experience may provide the youth participant with opportunities for career exploration and soft skills development. Work Experience may be provided virtually when the work experience is tied to the youth participant's career pathway, as outlined on the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and tied to a workplace.

Virtual work experiences are only allowed when remote work experiences are possible and practical. A work experience cannot be used for the sole purpose of developing soft skills and providing career exploration. WIOA requires both an academic and an occupational education component in a youth's work experience.

Work Experience may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate. A Work Experience workplace may take place in the private sector, non-profit sector, or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience environment where an employee/employer relationship exists (as defined by Fair Labor Standards Act).

Work Experience is an activity involving a time limited work assignment designed to develop specific job keeping skills and/or specific job skills. Work assignments shall include an evaluation of the skills developed during the assignment. Work Experience is provided to youth based on needs determined by a case manager's assessment and provided for in the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and documented in service notes in MOJobs.

Case managers should always seek to place youth in an employment opportunity that is similar to their career interests or supports the career pathway documented on their ISS. It is important to note, however, there may be instances where this is not possible or it is a youth's initial venture into the workforce; in those instances, case managers may find it necessary and practical to place the youth at a worksite where the participant would not only secure work experience while earning wages, but also facilitate the development of job readiness skills that are fundamental to success in the workplace. In these instance, case managers must document why it is not possible to secure a work experience within the desired career pathway.

Effective: February 2018; Revised July 2020; Updated November 2021, Reviewed Nov 2024

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The four types of work experience are:

- Pre-Apprenticeships programs,
- On-the- Job Training (OJT)
- Internships and Job Shadowing, and
- Work Experiences available throughout the year, including summer employment.

Each of these types of work experiences, with the exception of temporary, short-term Job-Shadowing, must include academic and occupational skills outlined in the training plan.

Case managers seek employers and worksites that are committed to helping youth receive the experience and training that is required for employment beyond the Work Experience period. The employer(s) must be willing to work closely with the case manager and notify them if issues or problems occur.

Employers need to have some flexibility in working with youth who have barriers to employment (transportation, childcare, personal adjustment problems, etc.) The case manager will help address these issues throughout the placement and, in some cases, into long-term employment. Participants placed in a Work Experience position must be given the opportunity to learn the skills necessary for successful employment in the field. A Work Experience placement is an intermediate employment step toward the long-term goal of permanent unsubsidized employment. The academic/occupational education component of work experience can take place on or off the worksite. Youth enrolled in high school, AEL classes, post-secondary education and occupational skills training concurrent with placement in work experience have met the academic and occupational education requirement.

Work Experience cannot exceed 400 hours at a worksite; the exception to this rule is Youth OJT Work Experience. In determining an appropriate length of time for a work experience, consideration should be given to the skill requirement of the position, the academic and occupational skills level of the participant, prior work experience, and the participant's EP/ISS. A work experience may be extended up to an additional 300 hours. Proper documentation of the need of the additional hours with an updated agreement and training plan are required. This documentation must be based on the participant's need to learn additional skills at the same worksite. Different work experiences in new positions to explore other career pathway options are allowable and the total number of work experiences for a youth are not limited. These additional work experiences may be developed for up to 400 hours and may also be extended by up to 300 hours with proper documentation. In-school youth will only be able to work as allowed under the Fair Labor Standards Act and Missouri Child Labor Laws. All participants and employers must be notified of the Complaint and Grievance Procedure.

Participants will be provided with the proper documentation and reviewed with the case manager as an orientation to the Work Experience services. Signature page must be completed and uploaded to the participant's record in the statewide case management system.

Worksite Agreements will be completed by the appropriate staff prior to the placement of a participant at the worksite. All **original** Worksite Agreement forms will be uploaded to the participant's record in the statewide case management system.

1. Worksite Agreements between the program operator and the Work Experience employer will be used in this activity. A worksite Agreement is required for each individual worksite (good for one year).
2. Worksites will not use WIOA participants to replace regular unsubsidized employees.
3. The hourly wage will be determined by the Youth Service Provider. The hourly wage will be based on minimum wage standards.
4. Service Provider will be considered the employer of record and will provide worker's compensation coverage to the participant.
5. WIOA participants will be paid only for actual hours worked. No pay will be given for lunch breaks, holidays or absences. Overtime is prohibited.
6. Work experience is limited to 14 WIOA participants per program year (July-June) per employer/worksites.

Worksite agreements must be signed by the employer, the participant and authorized program staff before it is valid. General Assurances will be reviewed with the Employer prior to signature of the document.

A youth participant may be participating in a youth work experience and participate in AEL at the same time.

- The youth may receive payment for attending AEL as the academic portion of the work experience.
- The hours paid for AEL will count toward the overall hours of the work experience.
- Youth participant cannot be paid for AEL participation alone. Case managers must post the appropriate service for each activity.
 - Both the work experience and AEL service must be post consecutively,
 - Separate time sheets are required to document hours worked in each activity, and
 - Separate work site agreements are required for any part of a work experience funded by WIOA (including AEL, when WIOA is funding the AEL portion of the work experience)

Work Experience/Internship Training Plan:

A skills analysis must be completed for each participant placed in a work experience activity. Each skill to be developed must be listed on the Training Plan signed by the employer. Skills listed should be attainments that will enhance the clients work history and assist them in becoming more employable. The Work Experience Training Plan will be completed by the case manager in collaboration with the employer and the participant. Each participant will have an individualized Work Experience Training Plan that will have a detailed description of the job duties they are to perform and the work maturity skills to be learned.

The total hours to complete the job assignment will be based upon the Training Outline/Hours Determination form and the skills the participant possesses at the time of training plan completion. Training Plan must be completed and signed by both the participant and the employer prior to the start date of the Work Experience. Copies will be given to the participant and the employer.

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Participants will be required to complete a minimum number of hours per week during the work experience to enhance their work history and assist them in becoming more employable.

Orientation Checklist for Employers/Supervisors:

Case managers will review all the items on the checklist with all worksite supervisors. Only worksite supervisors who sign the form will be allowed to sign the participant timesheets. All supervisors listed on the training must complete the Supervisor Orientation.

Orientation Checklist for Participant:

Case managers will review all the items on the checklist with the participant. The original will be placed in the participant file.

Participant Emergency Contact Information:

The information must be completed by the participant and maintained by the case managers with a copy given to the employer at the start of the Work Experience.

I-9 Documentation:

Case managers must complete the I-9 before the start of the Work Experience assignment. The I-9 with copies of the supporting documentation will be uploaded to the participant's record in the statewide case management system prior to the state date of the youth work experience. E-Verify must be completed within (3) working days of the start of Work Experience.

State and Federal W-4:

Participants must complete and sign both the MO W-4 and the Federal W-4.

Detailed Training Plan, which contains the following information:

- The Training Plan must outline both the academic and occupational components to be learned during the work experience.

Time and Attendance Records:

- Work Experience Timesheet Case notes
 - Timesheet case notes must include timeframe of pay period, number of hours to be paid, and remaining hours
 - The service provider's payroll system will be utilized to record and approve time. The hours worked each week cannot exceed forty (40) hours.
 - On a participant timesheet if the documented hours are incorrect and adjustments must be made prior to process for payroll, the participant must be informed of the adjustment and a detailed case note documenting that the participant was informed of and approved of the adjustments to the times, must be entered into the case management system. The case note must include details regarding what the adjustments were. If the case manager is unable to make contact with participant, the case note must document the attempted contact.
 - All timesheet must also be uploaded to the participant's record.

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- The participant shall not be paid for lunch breaks, holidays, and absences. The youth must enter the day and month, actual date, the specific times, and the number of hours worked that date. Supervisor must review the time sheet for accuracy. The time sheet must be signed and dated by the participant, worksite supervisor and approved by case managers. Payroll for hours worked are only to be issued from the approved time sheet.

Performance Evaluation:

- An evaluation of the skills to be attained must be completed. The first evaluation must be completed at the midpoint of the training plan hours. Subsequent evaluations must be done based on individual needs determined by both the employer and case manager. WIOA Youth Work Experience monitoring reports for both participant and employer must be completed on at least a monthly basis. Completed monitoring reports must be reviewed and signed by all parties. This information will be used in determining worksite appropriateness and participants' job retention potential, skills, abilities, and achievements. Training Progression case notes must be entered.

Monitoring:

- Mid –point monitoring and end-point monitoring will be conducted. Case managers will review participant work conditions and behaviors and discuss any problems with the employer and the participant