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Basic Skills Assessment Policy

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) focuses on serving "individuals with barriers to employment" and seeks to ensure access to quality services for these populations. WIOA states that recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient must receive priority for individualized career services and training services. For purposes of WIOA, Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) means, an individual:

1. Having English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
2. Are unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Defines #2 above as an individual who:

- Scores at or below the 8th grade level on a standardized test (upload test results confirming grade level)
- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 (upload current school transcripts)
- Has an overall grade of less than 65 (on a 100-point scale) in reading or math (upload current transcripts or report card)
- Scores Bronze or lower on the National Career Readiness Certificate
- Has a primary language barrier (upload documentation from Adult Education and Literacy program, a letter from the school, or a case note clearly supporting determination)
- Other documentation from the school approved by OWD prior to enrollment

Determining basic skills deficiency during intake assists in qualifying customers for eligibility, allows for quality referrals, and can determine program effectiveness.

Determination of WIOA Youth eligibility based on the BSD barrier:

A formalized assessment will be administered to evaluate the youth's strengths as well as any areas of deficiency in the academic skills of Reading, Math and Language. The Southeast Workforce Development Board have accepted the below instruments to be valid and reliable to evaluate the basic skills of the Region's population.

Effective: September 1st 2018; Revised 11/19/2019; Revised 5/2020; Revised 1/2022; Revised 7/2022, Revised 06/2024; Revised Dec 2025, Revised October 2026

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Basic Skills Assessments:

- •Scores at or below the 8th grade level on a standardized test (upload test results confirming grade level)
- • Has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 (upload current school transcripts)
- •Has an overall grade of less than 65 (on a 100-point scale) in reading or math (upload current transcripts or report card)
- • Scores Bronze or lower on the National Career Readiness Certificate
- • Has a primary language barrier (upload documentation from Adult Education and Literacy program, a letter from the school, or a case note clearly supporting determination)
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Determination of Basic Skills for the Objective Assessment (QA):

The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is the combination of the Objective Assessment and Employment Plan. The following conditions that apply to the participant must be followed:

- The individual Service Strategy must be developed jointly between the case manager and the youth participant. It is a plan to meet the youth's specific training and employment goals.
- WIOA requires that every youth completes an objective assessment to evaluate the basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs of the participant.
- The objective assessment must be completed entirely, including obtaining all assessment results, before the creation of the employment plan
- The youth's objective assessment should be utilized when developing the Employment Plan. The career path, needs, barriers, skills gaps, referrals, and possible supportive services identified in the objective assessment must be addressed on the Employment Plan.
- The objective assessment must identify the career pathway, if known, for the youth participant and is used to develop a corresponding Individual Service Strategy (ISS)

If the requirement to review basic skills as part of the objective assessment process is not the same as conducting a basic skills assessment for eligibility determination for the basic skills deficient barrier or as conducting a basic skills assessment for determination of an educational functioning level gain within the measurable skill gains indicator. If using the basic skills deficient component of WIOA Youth eligibility in WIOA (3)(5)(A), programs must use a generally accepted standardized test which DOL defines as an approved test from the list of tests the Secretary of Education determines to be suitable for use in the National Reporting System for Adult

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Education.

For purposes of the basic skills assessment portion of the objective assessment, LWDB's are not required to use assessments approved for use in the Department of Education's National Reporting System (NRS), nor are they required to determine an individual's grade level equivalent or educational functioning level (EFL).

LWDB's may use other formalized testing instruments designed to measure skills-related gains or less formal alternative assessment techniques such as observation, record reviews, basic skills screening tools, or interviews. Local programs may use previous basic skills assessment results if such previous assessments have been conducted within the past six months.

EFL

If measuring EFL gains under the measurable skill gains indicator, the State will only accept this measure for participants in the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program overseen by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

AEL-staff must administer the basic skills assessment (TABE), Job Center staff must accurately enter the scores into the EFL tab in the statewide electronic case-management system and retain documentation of the scores. See current OWD Policy on Measurable Skill Gains.

Basic Skills Screening Tool

The Southeast Region has adopted a screening tool to help identify if an individual is basic skills deficient. The Basic Skills Screening Tool is required for all WIOA youth applicants.
The Basic Skills Screening Tool below will help assess the youth for the required basic skills section of the OA and help determine if additional testing is needed to determine "basic skills deficient". The Basic Skills Screening Tool must not be used to determine a youth's educational needs.

Basic Skills Screening Tool Results

- A youth who is unable to complete the screening tool without assistance or answers "No" to one (1) or more questions must automatically be assessed as basic skills deficient using at least one of the approved assessments identified in the previous section.

- A youth who can complete the screening tool without assistance and answers "Yes" to all the questions has satisfied the basic skills requirement of the OA. However, for youth entering training services additional assessments may be used to determine the appropriateness of the training program.

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Determination of BSD for Adult Priority of Service:

The Basic Skills Screening Tool will help identify if an individual is basic skills deficient for the purposes of priority of service and referrals for Adults or Dislocated Workers. The screening tool should be given prior to conducting any assessment test. The tool is for identification of priority of service and for referral purposes.

Anyone unable to complete the screening tool without assistance or answers "No" to one (1) or more questions must automatically receive a referral for adult basic education services. Any WIOA Adult participant should receive priority of service as having a basic skills deficiency.

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Basic Skills Screening Tool

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

1) Do you have a high school diploma or equivalent? OR ☐ Yes ☐ No
   Currently enrolled in high school (not an equivalency Program). ☐ Yes
2) Can you follow basic written instructions and diagrams with no help or just a little help? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3) Can you fill out basic medical forms and job applications? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4) Without the aid of a calculator, can you add, subtract, multiply and divide with whole numbers up to 3 digits? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5) Can you do basic tasks on a computer? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6) Do you speak and read English well enough to get and keep a job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

For Internal Use Only:

Was the individual able to complete the screening tool without help? ☐ Yes ☐ No

For the Adult Program Only:	For the Youth Program Only:
If any question is answered, "No" or the form could not be completed independently, the individual should receive priority.	If any question is answered, "No" or the form could not be completed independently, the individual may have a BSD eligibility barrier.
Does the individual receive priority? ☐ Yes ☐ No	Does the individual have a BSD eligibility barrier? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of Case Manager: _____

Case Manager Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____