

Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee of the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 6, 2022
8:00 to 9:00 AM
Meeting Scheduled via ZOOM

Present: Marion French, Bob Coyne, Edie Arlauckas, Raegen Lawrence, Mark Rogacki, Jane Sullivan, Sergio Esteban, Randy Andre, Jarmani Dozier, Liz O'Brien, Seanelle Hawkins, Jennifer Geiger, Shawna Gareau-Kurtz, Laura Stradley

Staff and Guest: Lee Koslow, Dave Seeley, Laura Seelman, Viatta Carter, Marisol Young, Daniel Donnarumma

Approval of Minutes:

The September 13, 2022 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Review of PY 2021 Programmatic Monitoring Reports:

Lee Koslow began this discussion by noting that for the last couple of years, the committee has been able to review these results. He explained how Daniel Donnarumma will take a sample of the enrollments at each Career Center, as well as the Business Services Department, and will monitor eligibility, allowability of costs, and validation of data elements. If there is something that is missing that comes through as a finding, or if there is something that does not rise to the level of a finding but is not quite right and could become a finding in the future, this could be an area of concern. Dan also recognizes noted practices. Lee reviewed a summary of the participant file monitoring results for Program Years 2020 and 2021. Performance is summarized in the Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee slideshow.

New WIOA Adult/DW Follow-Up Services Policy (107):

Lee Koslow reported on a new policy that could benefit us from an outcomes standpoint. A committee of managers and staff got together to share input and feedback on how we might craft this policy in a way to maximize the benefit and minimize staff burden. The committee came up with something that meets the minimum requirements, is flexible if a Career Center or department or other Service Provider wants to make changes in how they are carrying it out, and it will maximize outcomes in terms of retaining individuals in employment and increasing wages.

Lee added, the reason we are doing this is because the WIOA Law does require that follow-up services be provided, as appropriate, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. This is something that we have always had to do. We had been waiting on a State policy before drafting our local policy. Since a state policy has not yet been released, we have decided to go forward with our own local policy. Two things we need to define in the policy include **what** are considered to be appropriate follow-up services and **when** to provide those follow-up services to participants.

Lee reviewed some highlights of the new WIOA Policy 107, Adult/DW Follow-Up Services, which include:

- What are appropriate follow-up services?
 - These are defined as any of the basic career services or individualized career services that are listed in the WIOA regulations. Additionally, the law calls for counselling about the work place. We have decided to also include referrals to transitional benefits for individuals receiving public assistance.
 - To help staff to determine who needs services and what services they need, the policy calls for each Career Center or Provider of Services to develop their own assessment guide that staff will use when working with follow-up customers.

- Written procedures
 - This policy is the default set of written procedures for the timing of the follow-up services, the responsibilities of the follow-up services, and any focus on special populations that a Career Center or other Provider of Services might have. Each Career Center or Service Provider may develop their own set of written procedures regarding timing of follow-up services, who provides them, and any populations of special focus.
- Responsibility for outreach
 - Staff must reach out to any participant who has not received a service in the last 30 days to offer them follow-up services. If they have not secured employment, we will offer them career services, because they have not Exited yet. One will Exit after 90 days with no service received. The staff member who provided the last service to the participant will be responsible for the outreach.
- Special populations focus
 - Staff must provide more intensive outreach, which will include multiple outreach attempts using two or more different methods of communication, to Veterans and eligible spouses, and training participants.
- Documentation
 - There is an Activity that can be put into OSOS to document that follow-up has been done. This does not extend an enrollment. This is our main way of checking how many are getting follow-up. There is an OSOS Comment that would be required, that would indicate the specifics of the follow-up contact and any resulting action taken or planned.

A motion that we recommend this policy be approved by the Board, with the addition that for co-enrolled participants, outreach may be conducted by partner staff, was made by Randy Andre and seconded by Seanelle Hawkins. The motion was carried unanimously.

Featured Discussion:

On what factors should we base the local board’s self-sufficiency wage? (Continued from our September meeting)

Lee Koslow began the discussion by noting this item was discussed at our last meeting. As a follow-up, we wanted to make a thoughtful decision on this, so we tabled any final decision or recommendation until this meeting, as we were out of time at our last meeting.

Lee provided some background information from our last meeting, including that for at least the last 15 years, our local area’s self sufficiency wage has been \$25/hour. That is the wage beyond which you would say that a family or a household could be self-sufficient, and therefore a WIOA Adult might not be in need of training if they are employed at that wage. We looked at some different measures of self-sufficiency last time and the one that stood out the most was the ALICE survival wage, which can be broken down by different household compositions. From this discussion, we had asked if we should consider using the ALICE wage to set our self-sufficiency wage for WIOA, for Monroe County. If so, should we pick a particular family composition? For example, should we do it for 2 Adults, 2 Children? Should we do the average? If we do the average, it might well be over \$25/hour come March. This would give us a benchmark to keep increasing the self-sufficiency wage for Monroe County. Or should we use a different measure?

Lee opened up the floor for group discussion by asking if we should make a decision now or should we wait for that new report to come out? Discussion included the following:

- A concern was raised hoping that we have good data to make an informed decision. There does not seem to be enough time left in this meeting today for the opportunity to discuss what we are using to inform our decision. It would be a disservice not to have enough time, good data, and the conversation.

- Lee provided a slide of information for Monroe County that includes the ALICE self-sufficiency wages for different family compositions.
- Does the number we come up with impact the real wages that a participant will earn or is it simply a mechanism to keep score to report and track data?
 - Lee responded this would be a goal wage, it wouldn't reflect what participants are earning. What it would reflect is what participants need to earn to be self-sufficient. What that can allow us to do is if somebody is earning less, it can allow us to make the determination that they do need services to bring them up to that wage, hopefully.
- Going forward, how do we do this ongoing, so that we do not have this discussion every so many years?
 - Lee responded, that is the benefit of picking a tool like the ALICE wage, because it gets updated regularly.
- Once the hourly wage is set, whatever is decided, that is the minimum living wage in Monroe County, but the people applying for any benefits, they will be impacted by the prevailing wage/rate that we decide. There may be people applying for benefits that have a different family composition. Is there a way to calculate the hourly rate, but it does not mean the people that will be using the benefits will be exactly the same pattern that we are using to determine that. Is that the case?
 - Lee responded that is correct. We could do multiple scenarios by different household patterns. This may be overly complicated for both participants and staff. We have always had just one hourly wage and we have chosen it so that it covered certain family compositions that we wanted to cover no matter what.
- Are we talking Priority of Service here?
 - Lee responded not exactly. We do have Priority of Service for Adult training participants. This is a higher level than the Priority of Service, which currently is \$20.08/hr. You could be earning more than the \$20.08 but still be low income or still be receiving SNAP benefits and we could fund the training. The self-sufficiency wage is the wage above which, if you are making that, we cannot fund you for training using WIOA Adult funds.
- A concern was raised regarding the need to understand what goal we are reaching and how we are looking at the data.
 - Lee wanted to confirm the following: Are we looking at households and serving a household or are we looking at individuals and serving an individual under our WIOA services? Under WIOA, we do not serve households or families, we serve individual participants. When it comes to a self-sufficiency wage and the way it is put forth under WIOA, we would be looking at just an individual participant wage, regardless of what anybody else in the household is earning.

The decision was made to memorialize this to the group, especially for those who might not be in attendance, and from there, be ready in March to create that final number, unless there is something that comes out in the interim. Lee will send everyone a summary breakdown of our discussion, two weeks before the March meeting, which will include some of the issues that were raised between the last two times we have talked about this, and some options for us. Everybody will have this as pre-reads and will be as prepared as possible. We will set aside a little bit more time for discussion than we had today. Our goal will be to get to a decision on this in March.

- The question was raised if there is any particular reason why we are favoring the ALICE report over the MIT calculator? Is this something we can review, because the MIT numbers are significantly greater than the ALICE report.
 - Lee responded that it depends on what you call significantly. For a family of 4, the MIT numbers are \$71,578. The ALICE survival is \$66,890. We are talking less than 10%, at least for a family of 4. When it comes to MIT, there are 2 questions that will help us to make the decision, and we can consider this in March:
 - 1) Do we know when they are going to be updated?
 - 2) Can we get County specific data?

Lee concluded the meeting has been a really good discussion and thanked everyone for their contributions.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Randy Andre and seconded by Mark Rogacki. The motion was carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Scheduled: March 7, 2023

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 AM

Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:

Lee Koslow 12/13/2022