



# **EASTERN WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD, INC.**

*Proudly serving Adair, Cherokee, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okmulgee, Sequoyah and Wagoner Counties in Oklahoma*

## **DEMAND OCCUPATIONS AND SKILLS POLICY**

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 18, 2008

EWIB is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program  
Auxiliary Aids and Services are Available upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities

**PURPOSE:**

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To establish a local policy regarding the development and use of demand occupations and demand skills listings. This issuance provides policy, guidance and procedures for the administration and oversight of customer supportive services. It is the intention of Eastern Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) administration that this document conforms to the pertinent legislation.

This policy provides guidance to local board staff, service provider staff, and One Stop Partners in selecting appropriate training programs for customers of the WIA system. The WIA also requires each local workforce investment area to determine the skills that are necessary to obtain the jobs in the area. This information is a required part of the WIA administrative plan that is required. This policy contains information on the methodology of determining these skills for the local area.

The current policy of the State of Oklahoma limits the use of WIA funds to training for demand occupations within targeted industries. The information in this policy will assist the local Board in its identification of suitable training programs which provide training for these demand occupations.

**AUTHORITY:**

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The authority for this policy derives from Section 134(d) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) which requires each local workforce investment board to make available, through their one-stop career centers, a listing of eligible providers of training services (the "State List").

Section 134(d)(4)(G)(iii) of the Act specifies that the training services provided with the support of WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds shall be linked to certain "demand occupations"--

*"(iii) Linkage to occupations in demand.--Training services provided under this paragraph shall be directly linked to occupations that are in demand in the local area, or in another area to which an adult or dislocated worker receiving such services is willing to relocate, except that a local board may approve training services for occupations determined by the local board to be in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in the local area."*

**BACKGROUND:**

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The identification of demand occupations is an important duty of local workforce investment boards. By identifying demand occupations, local boards can help to make sure that WIA resources are deployed to meet the current and future workforce needs of employers in our area.

Each year, the Eastern Workforce Investment Board receives WIA funds which may be used to increase the skills of eligible adults and dislocated workers. Occupational skill training activities are a substantial component of the workforce development services that are offered through our One-Stop Career Centers.

Typically, occupational skills training is made available to WIA program participants through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITA's). Participants may choose to use his/her ITA to purchase training services through any eligible training provider on the State List. Alternatively, a WIA participant may receive training through a contract (such as a Customized Training agreement or an On-the-Job Training contract).

## **BOARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

According to **§ 661.305 20 CFR 652** and **The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 § 117(d)**, the Local Board is responsible conducting oversight of the One-Stop system, youth activities and employment and training activities under title I of WIA, in partnership with the chief elected official. **20 CFR 663.145(a)** clearly states that *"WIA title I formula funds allocated to local areas for adults and dislocated workers must be used to provide core, intensive and training services through the One-Stop delivery system. Local Boards determine the most appropriate mix of these services, but all three types must be available for both adults and dislocated workers."* These responsibilities include: selecting eligible youth service providers based on the recommendations of the youth council, identifying eligible providers of adult and dislocated worker intensive services and training services, and maintaining a list of eligible providers with performance and cost information, as required in **20 CFR part 663, subpart E**; and developing a budget for the purpose of carrying out the duties of the Local Board, subject to the approval of the chief elected official.

## **STATE & FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS:**

**Federal Requirements:** The Federal Regulations at 20 CFR Part 663.310 describes the requirements of federal law that must be met by local workforce investment areas.

*"Section 663.310: Who may receive training services?"*

*"Training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults and dislocated workers who..."*

*"(c) Select a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities either in the local area or in another area to which the individual is willing to relocate..."*

**State Requirements:** The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission addresses the requirements of WIA Section 134(d)(4)(G)(iii) through **Oklahoma Employment & Training Issuance #9-2005**, "Demand Occupations Policy."

**OETI #9-2005** is a statement of Oklahoma's statewide policy on demand occupations. It provides guidance and policy direction to local Workforce Boards and Workforce Areas on the development and use of demand occupations and demand skills listings. It requires local workforce investment boards to establish local procedures for the development and maintenance of demand occupations and demand skills lists.

The core of the State Policy provided in **OETI #9-2005** is stated in the following paragraphs:

*Message: WIA training opportunities, whether the result of Individual Training Accounts (ITA) or contracts, should focus on community talent growth and aligning the workforce with targeted industry clusters (existing or emerging). To that end, occupations and/or skills shall not, in all instances, require history of demand to qualify for identification as "In Demand".*

- *Each local board shall establish and maintain a list of occupations in demand, hereafter referred to as "Demand Occupations", that are:*
  - *In demand in the local board's Workforce Investment Area; or*
  - *Are determined by the local board to be in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in the local area.*

- *Are common to targeted industry clusters within the workforce investment area.*
- *Local boards shall also establish a list of demand skills. These skills should:*
  - *Support economic development priorities;*
  - *Focus on industrial sectors and clusters, whether present or emerging;*
  - *Address industry-specific or general shortages;*
  - *Enhance workplace literacy, including vocational English as a second language.*
- *Targeted industry clusters, demand occupations, and demand skills must be identified by the board, documented in official meeting minutes, and recertified as current during the first meeting of each program year that qualifies for attendance by the public under the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act.*
- *Local boards are not required to include in their listings, skills or occupations that are in demand in another area to which an adult or dislocated worker is willing to relocate, and for which training has been approved.*

*Action: Local boards shall establish local procedures for development and maintenance of demand occupations and demand skills lists, and shall have those lists established by the beginning of program year 2005. This is official policy and must be maintained in your permanent files.*

## **LOCAL POLICY:**

It shall be the policy of the Eastern Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) that all training services provided with WIA resources shall be delivered in a manner that fully complies with the WIA law and regulations.

## **DEMAND OCCUPATIONS LIST**

The EWIB shall be responsible for developing and maintaining a list of “Demand Occupations.”

The list of demand occupations shall include:

- Occupations that are in demand in Eastern Oklahoma area; or
- Occupations determined to be in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in the Eastern Oklahoma area.

The Demand Occupations for the Eastern Workforce Area shall consist of Demand Occupations based on labor predictions published by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (ODOC), the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC), and Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc (EMSI).

This policy establishes an “in demand occupation standard” to be used to determine occupations allowable for training activities. Occupational demand should not be measured simply in terms of the annual number of job openings for a particular job title. High turnover that is associated with certain job titles should be taken into account. Other factors to be considered include: (a) the minimum skills required to perform the job; and (b) the average wage for an entry-level position in the occupation. The occupations in demand standard will allow the Eastern Workforce Investment Board to:

- Extend services to low-income workers and place them on a path to self sufficiency;

- Target high-wage industry sectors of the economy and occupations for training and assist in developing customized training programs;
- Offer training in occupations with career ladders that lead to self-sufficiency; and
- Make job-training programs that lead to self sufficiency a priority.

EWIB approved targeted Industry clusters as identified by the ODOC, EWIB, and EMSI.

1. **Trade**
2. **Healthcare**
3. **Education**
4. **Manufacturing**
5. **Government**
6. **Construction**
7. **Agriculture and Food Processing**
8. **Administrative and Support Services**
9. **Hospitality, Tourism and Recreation**
10. **Finance and Insurance**

**Focus is to be on:**

- 1) **Health Care,**
- 2) **Information and Technology,** and
- 3) **Manufacturing.**

### **Approval of Training Programs for Demand Occupations**

Programs selected must provide training for occupations which are on the demand occupations list and which are occupations that are typically found in the targeted industries. Typical training programs may provide training which would qualify an individual for employment in multiple occupations. To approve a training program, that program must qualify an individual for at least one occupation in a targeted industry.

EWIB's Demand Occupations list will be available in the workforce centers of the Eastern area and on the EWIB website at [www.easternwib.com](http://www.easternwib.com).

The list of targeted industry clusters will be reviewed by the Eastern Workforce Investment Board at its first regular meeting of the program year. The vote on the report will be documented in official meeting minutes.

An updated report will be presented to the EWIB on an annual basis during the first meeting of each program year (or more frequently, if determined necessary).

### **DEMAND SKILLS LIST**

The EWIB shall also establish a list of demand skills. These skills should:

- Support economic development priorities;
- Focus on industrial sectors and clusters, whether present or emerging;
- Address industry-specific or general shortages;
- Enhance workplace literacy, including vocational English as a second language.

Demand Skills may include general workplace skills and competencies that have been recommended by private or public research organizations.

The EWIB's Demand Skills List will include skills/competencies that are considered necessary to Eastern Oklahoma's future economic development. It may also include skills and competencies that are specific to targeted industries.

The EWIB approved Demand Skills are:

1. Microsoft Office Products:
  - Word
  - Excel
  - Power Point
  - Publisher
  - Outlook
  - Access
  - Front Page
2. Keyboarding (typing skills)
3. Computer Literacy
4. Basic Literacy
5. Math Skills
6. Soft Skills
7. Accounting Software Applications
8. WorkKeys and Keytrain Remediation
9. English as a Second Language (ESL)

EWIB's Demand Skills list will be available in the workforce centers of the Eastern area and on the EWIB website at [www.easternwib.com](http://www.easternwib.com).

The report will be reviewed by the Board at its first regular meeting of the program year. The vote on the report will be documented in official meeting minutes.

An updated report will be presented to the EWIB on an annual basis during the first meeting of each program year (or more frequently, if necessary).