

3.2.7 STRATEGIC POPULATIONS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

In addition to statutory requirements concerning eligibility and priority of service for particular populations (including veterans priority of service for all programs), all programs of WIOA Title I must focus on serving individuals with barriers to employment and must seek to ensure access to quality services for these populations [TEGL 19-16]. This does not mean that these individuals are the only ones who should be served, but that each LWDA's services should be designed to ensure these individuals identified as having barriers to employment are able to effectively access all programs and that those programs are designed to help these individuals overcome their respective barriers. This policy does not change the fact that all populations must meet statutory program eligibility criteria.

Each local area must develop policies and procedures to ensure access to quality services for individuals with barriers to employment for all programs, while conforming to statutory regulations concerning each program. LWDBs may consider the unique populations of their areas when creating these policies and procedures, and they may identify other populations who should be included as "individuals with barriers to employment". The local policy must be approved by the LWDB.

Local areas must consider the following populations with barriers to employment when creating their policies and procedures [WIOA § 3(24); TEGL 19-16]:

- A. Displaced homemakers, as defined in WIOA § 3(24);
- B. Low-income individuals, as defined in WIOA § 3(36);
- C. Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians (as defined in WIOA sec. 166(b);
- D. Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, as defined in WIOA § 3(25) and including individuals who are in receipt of Social Security Disability Insurance [TEGL 19-16];
- E. Older individuals, defined as age 55 or older [WIOA § 3(39)];
- F. Ex-offenders or offenders [TEGL 19-16], as defined in WIOA § 3(38);
- G. Homeless individuals, including runaways and homeless children and youth, as defined in TEGL 19-16;
- H. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
- I. Individuals who are English language learners, as defined in WIOA § 203(7);
- J. Individuals who have low levels of literacy (i.e. basic skills deficient [TEGL 19-16]);

- K. Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers to employment;
- L. Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, as defined in WIOA § 167(i)(1-3);
- M. Individuals within 2 years exhausting lifetime eligibility under TANF;
- N. Single parents (custodial and noncustodial, mothers and fathers) and single pregnant women [TEGLs 19-16 & 21-16];
- O. Long-term unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks) [TEGL 19-16]
- P. Other groups as the LWDB determines to have barriers to employment.