WIOA Youth Program and Job Corps Collaboration Opportunities

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) encompasses an array of programs for youth, including: the WIOA Title I(B) Youth program, also referred to as the WIOA Youth program, WIOA Title I(B) Adult program, YouthBuild, Title II Adult Education, Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, and Job Corps. Through the American Job Center (AJC) Network, these required partner programs provide access to information and services that lead to positive educational and employment outcomes. Serving young people through the AJC Network allows the workforce system to operate in a more unified and seamless manner. More information on AJCs and youth programs under WIOA can be found in the WIOA Desk Reference: Serving Youth in an Integrated American Job Center Network, located at: https://ion.workforcegps.org/resources/2018/01/25/17/27/WIOA-Desk-Reference-Serving-Youth-in-an-Integrated-American-Job-Center-Network.

This document provides an overview of the WIOA Youth program and the Job Corps program specifically, and outlines strategies for coordination and the benefits of partnership. The WIOA Youth program and the Job Corps program are two distinct programs, using different program models; however, they both help youth ages 16-24 to attain their educational and employment goals. Job Corps has residential and non-residential programs specifically for training out-of-school youth. Most Job Corps programs are residential where participants are provided room and board while they work towards learning a trade. The WIOA Youth program provides training opportunities for in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY) in a non-residential setting in every local area in the U.S.

THE WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM

The WIOA Youth program provides a comprehensive array of services that focus on assisting youth (OSY and ISY) with one or more barriers to employment prepare for postsecondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities.

To be eligible, OSY must be between the ages of 16 to 24, not attending school, and have one or more barriers to employment, and ISY must be between the ages of 14 to 21, attending school, low income, and have one or more barriers to employment. The WIOA Youth program has a particular emphasis on serving youth not connected to school at the time of enrollment as well as providing youth with work experiences.

Services offered within the WIOA Youth program include paid and unpaid work experiences, such as summer and year-round employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, on-the-job training; and occupational skills training. It also provides tutoring and alternative secondary school services, leadership development opportunities, supportive services, mentoring, follow-up services, comprehensive guidance and counseling, financial literacy education, entrepreneurial skills training, services that provide labor market and employment information; and postsecondary education and training preparation activities.

The WIOA Youth program operates in all 50 states and territories. To learn more about the WIOA Youth program, please visit: https://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/wioaformula.cfm.
THE JOB CORPS PROGRAM

Job Corps is an education and career-training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps eligible young people ages 16-24 improve the quality of their lives by empowering them to get great jobs and become independent. It also develops strategic partnerships with local and national employers and community service organizations.

There are more than 100 Job Corps centers throughout the country, most of which are primarily residential. Participants in the program are provided room and board while they work towards learning a trade, which can last up to two years. The program also helps students complete their high school education, if needed, and gain employment. Participants are paid a monthly allowance which varies depending on how long they remain in the program. Job Corps also provides career counseling and helps students transition into careers when they leave a Job Corps center.

Job Corps graduates go on to careers in the private sector, apprenticeships, the military, or higher education or advanced training programs. Graduates receive transitional support services, including help locating housing, child care, and transportation.

Job Corps gives its students the opportunity to realize their full potential, and gain new career, academic, and employability skills. To learn more about the Job Corps program and the eligibility requirements, please visit: https://www.jobcorps.gov.

Benefits of a WIOA Youth Program and Job Corps Partnership

There are many benefits to a WIOA Youth program and Job Corps partnership. First, it helps maximize the level of services provided to youth in a local community. Second, it may produce efficiencies or impact that neither program could produce on their own. Considerations for local WIOA Youth program and Job Corps operators may include:

- **Coordinating referrals**: Job Corps may refer students to American Job Centers and/or the WIOA Youth program to enhance placement and follow-up activities. Also, Job Corps may refer applicants who have been determined not to be suitable or eligible for Job Corps to the WIOA Youth Program or to the AJC. Likewise, AJC or WIOA Youth program staff may refer youth who have been determined to need more intensive or residential services that Job Corps can provide.

- **Developing linkages for recruitment and placement**: Both the WIOA Youth program and Job Corps are required partners in the AJC Network, and local area coordination should occur through the Network. Local workforce development areas may initiate formal, structured partnerships between Job Corps and local WIOA Youth programs for recruitment and placement of program participants. The benefit of this type of partnership is to reach youth who may not currently be served, and to reduce recruitment and placement costs through improved cooperation and information sharing. AJC staff may provide youth access to services and connect them to the program that best aligns with their needs. Job Corps, AJCs, and WIOA Youth programs may also co-sponsor hiring or outreach events to reduce the cost and increase the scale of their placement and recruitment efforts.
• **Promoting information-sharing between programs**: WIOA Youth Committees and Job Corps Workforce Councils can work together to determine how to ensure that local labor market information and other valuable information can be regularly exchanged. Job Corps representatives are encouraged to participate in local WIOA Youth Committees or the entity that fulfills the role of the WIOA Youth Committee in their local area.

By working together, both the Job Corps and WIOA Youth programs can align education and training with the needs of employers to help youth attain relevant certifications, connect successfully to work, and advance to higher levels of education.