

Youth Individual Service Strategy (ISS)

TEMPLATE COVER PAGE

ISS Template Background

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) regularly surveys the field for training and technical assistance needs. One topic frequently discussed (through technical assistance requests, direct requests and on webinars), is the need for more technical assistance on the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). There is no mandated WIOA Youth ISS template required. ETA created a sample ISS template that may be used for WIOA Youth program case management. The template is not mandatory and local WIOA Youth programs should modify it to suit their needs.

This template was developed based on 39 ISS submissions from across the country. The template compiles key elements, common themes, and best practices from the various submissions.

Components of the ISS

WIOA section 129(c)((1)(B) requires that all eligible youth have an ISS that is directly linked to 1 or more WIOA indicators of performance, identifies career pathways that include education and employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant taking into account the assessment. The ISS is planned in conjunction with the youth and adopts a customer and strengths-based customized approach that addresses the unique strengths, challenges and needs of each participant. The ISS should be revisited regularly with the youth.

While there is no one example of the perfect Individual Service Strategy (ISS), strong examples include the following components:

- ▶ Addresses key goal areas in education, training, employment and personal development
- ▶ Includes short and long-term goals
- ▶ Ties the goals to the 14 WIOA Youth program elements/services areas
- ▶ Includes objectives and action steps
- ▶ Includes needed referrals for services and support services
- ▶ Includes timelines with start, end and review dates
- ▶ Includes appropriate individuals involved
- ▶ Addresses potential barriers
- ▶ Includes progress updates/status
- ▶ Includes youth-staff agreements

The ISS Template

This template is an optional tool and not mandatory in its use. State and local providers have the flexibility to customize the ISS to what makes sense for their programs, policies, organizational culture, data collection systems and service processes.

How should the form be used?

- ▶ Local areas are encouraged to adapt the form that aligns with their context. This means keeping sections that make sense, adding more where needed and even deleting what seems to be unrelated.
- ▶ Form may be used as a paper version or tailored for electronic submissions.
- ▶ Staff and youth have input on the final form.
- ▶ Sound practice may be to pilot and revise as necessary. Also, review and update as needed over time.

Key features of the template:

- ▶ The template includes an assessment section. This is not intended to replace the comprehensive assessment that is completed with the youth. Rather it should complement the assessment and provide a quick overview.
- ▶ The template includes a goals section to identify short- and long-term educational, employment and personal goals.
- ▶ The template includes all 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements and groups them into four sections.
- ▶ The template includes an agreement for the youth and staff member to complete. This sets the dynamic of a partnership with equal responsibilities and expectations.

Tips for Implementing the ISS

If a new ISS form is introduced, all staff should receive training on the use and implementation of the form. Periodic reviews of the form should be conducted to determine if updates or revisions are needed. Below are a few tips for staff to consider as they develop the implementation process:

- ▶ Dedicate enough time to complete the ISS with the youth. Allow time to brainstorm and develop their “road map” and how they plan on accomplishing their goals.
- ▶ Introduce the concept of and encourage the youth to develop SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound).
- ▶ Encourage the youth to lead and take ownership of the ISS process.
- ▶ Develop a schedule for ISS review with the youth.
- ▶ Celebrate successes and create learning opportunities from setbacks.