

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT**

<b>VIRGINIA WORKFORCE LETTER (VWL) 14-03</b>
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**TO:** LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS

**FROM:** WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

**SUBJECT:** LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

**RESCINDS:** VWL 12-06 Youth Work Readiness and Life Skills

**DATE:** December 1, 2014

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**References:**

Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Section 129;  
20 Code of Federal Regulation Part 664; Final Rules;  
Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-05; Subject: Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance Accountability System and Related Performance Issues; February 17, 2006;  
Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-05, Change 2; Subject: Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance Accountability System and Related Performance Issues; May 20, 2009;  
Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 33-12; Subject: Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program Guidance for Program Year (PY) 2013; June 11, 2013;  
Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 4 -13; Subject: Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Performance Reporting System; August 28, 2013;

**Purpose:**

To provide local workforce areas with guidance to enhance the provision of Leadership Development Skills activities to youth participating in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs.

**Background:**

The Regional Office has completed reviews of the quarterly Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD), which indicate that not all youth are receiving Leadership

Development Opportunities. VWL 12-06 required that all youth participants receive Work readiness and Life Skills Training. Work readiness and life skills are included in the definition of Leadership Development Opportunities. The policy is being revised to incorporate work readiness and life skills under the umbrella of Leadership Development Opportunities. The Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC) should accurately reflect the services provided to customers participating in WIA programs.

**Leadership Development Services are defined as:**

Services that include, but are not limited to, opportunities that encourage responsibility, employability and other positive social behaviors such as (a) exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities; (b) community and service learning projects; (c) peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring; (d) organizational and team work training, including team leadership training; (e) training in decision making, including determining priorities; and (f) citizenship training, including life skills training, such as parenting, work behavior training and budgeting of resources. (*WIASRD Data Element 348 -Received Leadership Development Opportunities*)

The Workforce Investment Act strongly considers that “Leadership Development” skills such as work readiness skills and life skills are valued skill sets along the path of workforce development that will contribute to successful employment and retention and better daily living based on informed decision-making. These skills sets must be the foundation and platform on which to build and provide other services/training activities that will lead to gainful employment and economic security in the lives of youth participants.

These skill sets consist of world-of-work awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, values clarification and personal understanding, career planning and decision making, and job search techniques (resumes, mock job interviews, applications and follow-up letters). They also encompass survival/daily living skills such as using the phone, telling time, financial literacy, budgeting, shopping, renting an apartment, opening a bank account and using public transportation. They also include positive work habits, attitudes and behaviors such as punctuality, regular attendance, presenting a neat appearance, getting along and working well with others, exhibiting good conduct, following instructions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability, and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job. This category also entails developing motivation and adaptability, obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills, and acquiring an improved self-image.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM DESIGN**

Activities should be designed to encourage participants to take responsibility for their learning, to understand and manage their career options, and to develop social skills and a maturity level that will help them interact positively with others. This is especially true for at-risk students, high school dropouts and out-of-school youth generally, as the WIA program may be one of the

few opportunities they come across to learn how to enter and interact in the world of work and develop constructive daily living skills. These efforts should rely on developmentally or age-appropriate strategies: what is appropriate for an out-of-school youth may not be appropriate for an in-school youth. Consequently, the services provided to these youth participants and the work readiness goals and life skills goals set for these youth should be age appropriate.

Note: Appropriate work readiness activities must be provided to participants prior to enrollment in work experience.

**Action Required:**

All WIA youth participants **shall** receive “leadership development” activities, to include: work readiness and life skills activities during their enrollment in the WIA program. Participation in these activities should be captured in the VaWC and documented in individual case files. To ensure that all WIA youth participants receive access to the activities outlined in this guidance, Youth Councils and WIBs are encouraged to include a specific reference to work readiness and life skills activity requirements in contracts negotiated with youth program service providers. The VCCS Office of Workforce Development Services will work with local areas upon request to determine appropriate methods for formally including this requirement in RFPs and contracts for youth programs.

**Documentation Requirements:** (any of the following are acceptable)

Attendance sheets with customer’s name and date(s) of the provision of service

Curriculum – copy of the training materials

Activity results – information indicating what task or activities the participant completed