

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION Workforce Information
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL DNPTTA/Workforce Information
	DATE April 28, 2014

ADVISORY: TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 23-13

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
 STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
 STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS
 STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS
 STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
 STATE LABOR MARKET INFORMATION, WORKFORCE
 INFORMATION, OR RESEARCH DIRECTORS

FROM: ERIC M. SELEZNOW /s/
 Acting Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Program Year (PY) 2014 Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS):
 Policy and Program Guidance, Application Instructions, and Formula
 Allocations

1. **Purpose.** To provide policy and program guidance for the development, management, and delivery of labor market information and workforce information (LMI-WI) funded through WIGS.
2. **References.**
 - Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13 and 44 U.S.C. 3501-3520)
 - 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 93, 96, 97, and 98; and 2 CFR 225
 - Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 as amended (29 U.S.C. 794d)
 - Wagner-Peyser Act, Sections 3, 10(c), and 15 (29 U.S.C. 49b, , 49(i)(c), and 49(l)(2))
 - Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Pub. L. 105-220, Sections 111(d)(8) and 309 (29 U.S.C. 49(l)(2))
 - Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 29-12, May 10, 2013, *Program Year (PY) 2013 Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS): Policy and Program Guidance, Application Instructions, and Formula Allocations*
3. **OMB Approval.** To conform with the PRA, the President’s Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has reviewed and approved this information collection (OMB Control Number 1205-0417), whose authorization expires March 31, 2017. Under 5 CFR 1320.5(b), an agency cannot conduct, sponsor, or require a response to a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid OMB Control Number.

RESCISSIONS None	EXPIRATION DATE Continuing
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4. **Fund Allotments, Goals and Objectives.** The U.S. Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is awarding \$32,000,000 in PY 2014 for WIGS. ETA distributes a total of \$176,800 to Guam and the Virgin Islands, and allocates the remaining \$31,823,200 by formula to the states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. For the formula group, 40 percent is distributed equally and the remaining 60 percent is distributed based on each jurisdiction's relative share of the civilian labor force for the 12-month period ending September 2013. **Attachment 1 shows the allocations.** Hereafter, we use the term "state" to also include the District of Columbia and the territories.

Each year ETA funds these WIGS and specifies grant requirements. State workforce agencies use WIGS to develop and disseminate essential state and local LMI-WI for job seekers, employers, educators, economic developers, and others.

The main body of this TEGL describes required, encouraged and other allowable activities, and explains the rationales for ETA policies and requirements. **Attachment 2 summarizes WIGS requirements, and includes important administrative details that are not covered in the body of the guidance, such as deadlines and submission requirements for grant deliverables.**

5. **Required, Encouraged, and Other Allowable Activities.** WIGS primarily serve four customer groups: 1) the public, including job seekers and employers; 2) labor market intermediaries who help individuals find a job or make career decisions, such as employment and school counselors, case managers at American Job Centers, and community-based organizations; 3) policymakers, including state and local workforce boards, and employment and economic program planners and operators; and 4) miscellaneous other customers, including researchers, commercial data providers, and the media. Grantees have considerable flexibility to meet customer needs, but must consult their customers and prepare several types of products.

Required products. Grantees must produce a database (*a* below) plus two types of public products (*b* and *c* below). If the grantee does not produce a required deliverable, it must negotiate an extension and a revised schedule with the appropriate ETA regional office.

- a. **Workforce Information Database (WIDb).** Accurate and reliable data are a cornerstone of the nation's workforce investment system. The WIDb includes the most important workforce-related data elements and defines them consistently, ensuring comparability across jurisdictions. Its variables include employment projections; wages; educational programs; the locations of educational and training institutions; contact information for all U.S. employers; and occupational licenses and certifications.

States must use WIGS funds to populate, maintain, and update the WIDb, and to provide related staff training. Grantees must implement and maintain the most current version (now 2.5) of WIDb and populate all Analyst Resource Center (ARC)-designated core tables. The ARC Web site (www.workforceinfodb.org) describes all required data elements and helps grantees obtain maximum benefit from the WIDb. The National

Crosswalk Service Center can help grantees to recode their occupational data, and provides a repository for other types of crosswalks (515-242-5034 or www.xwalkcenter.org). ETA uses the WIDb to offer career information and guidance via CareerOneStop (www.careeronestop.org), ETA’s suite of national electronic tools for job seekers and labor market intermediaries such as employment counselors, employers, and many others.

- b. State and local industry and occupational employment projections.** These projections are the most frequently-requested type of employment statistic besides the unemployment rate. Projections are used for career guidance; to plan employment, education and training, and economic development programs; as supporting documentation to apply for Federal grants; and for many other purposes. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) funds national employment projections, but WIGS fund the state and local projections, produced by the states with assistance from ETA and BLS.

Because ETA views employment projections as among the most important products funded by WIGS, its projections requirements are more stringent than for other WIGS products (see the table below). ETA’s requirements do not differ between industry and occupational projections, but vary for long-term vs. short-term projections, and statewide vs. sub-state projections. ETA grantees who are unable to produce the required projections must report this to their ETA Regional Administrator.

Grantees must use the methodology, software, and guidelines specified by the state-led Projections Managing Partnership (PMP) to produce all projections. Additionally, the Estimates Data System (EDS) is to be used to provide the staffing patterns for sub-state projections. To meet these requirements, ETA encourages grantees to use WIGS funds to obtain training provided by the PMP (see <http://dev.projectionscentral.com/>, click on “Online Training” at the top), ARC, and other LMI-WI-related sources.

Type of industry and occupational projection	Required, encouraged and other allowable activities	Applicable years for <i>this</i> TEGL
Statewide <i>long-term</i>	10-year projections required in odd-numbered calendar years	NA (required in next year’s TEGL)
Statewide <i>short-term</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-year projections submission required each year; ETA also encourages states to disseminate their short-term projections • State may <i>also</i> produce longer projections (e.g., 3, 4 or 5 years). ETA discourages 1-year projections, which date quickly. ETA also encourages states to disseminate these projections. 	Projected to 2016, using a 2014 base year
Sub-state <i>long-term</i>	10-year projections required in even-numbered calendar years	Projected to 2022, using a 2012 base year
Sub-state <i>short-term</i>	Optional: an allowable and encouraged, but not required, activity	NA

- c. **A statewide annual economic analysis report.** ETA regards state economic and labor market analyses as essential to plan WIA and other workforce programs. Therefore, ETA requires statewide economic analysis reports, and encourages annual publication. However, ETA recognizes that conditions may not change sufficiently each year to necessitate an annual report, and gives states the discretion to determine their frequency. For years in which a comprehensive economic report is not issued, grantees must publish other, less comprehensive economic reports of value to state policymakers (including the governor and state legislature), as well as state and local workforce investment boards (WIBs).

Grantees have broad discretion over the reports' contents, but they should include analyses of trends and challenges — at both the state and sub-state levels — of such topics as gross domestic product; employment growth or decline (actual and projected); unemployment and other labor market hardship indicators (such as low earnings); identification of growing and/or in-demand occupations and/or industries; other analyses of important industries and occupations; and skill shortages, mismatches and deficiencies, within the limitations of the available data. The analyses should address the jobless population as a whole, as well as the experiences, needs, and challenges of the jobless targeted populations identified in ETA WIA/Wagner-Peyser integrated state planning requirements specified on page 3 of the “State Integrated Workforce Plan Requirements for Workforce Investment Act Title I/Wagner-Peyser Act and Department of Labor Workforce Programs” (<http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/wia-planning/docs/integrated-planning-guidance.pdf>).

ETA will *not* accept the following submissions for the economic analysis report or its substitute: 1) data tables alone; 2) job listings; 3) maps alone; 4) reports done by the grantee for BLS (e.g., news releases, employment situation reports, etc.); or 5) reports solely funded by Federal sources other than WIGS.

Encouraged economic and labor market reports and products. ETA encourages grantees to produce other reports and data in addition to those specified above: grantees have wide discretion in both the topics and presentation format. These reports should include accurate data, actionable information, and resources that enable job seekers, employers, staff in American Job Centers, policy makers, and the workforce investment system to make informed decisions about the services, training, and career paths that lead to good jobs. Examples of such miscellaneous products include online self-service tools and other occupational and career guidance resources for job seekers; industry- or occupation-specific research; and studies of topics of continuing interest such as labor or skill shortages, mismatches, and deficiencies. ETA encourages grantees to review the reports issued by other states to obtain useful ideas (http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual_report.cfm).

Other allowable activities. ETA strongly encourages grantees to help their state Wagner-Peyser, WIA, and other grant partners better identify and more rigorously report when participants receive workforce information services, to ensure that performance reports better

measure the value and impact of LMI-WI. ETA also encourages grantees to 1) leverage WIGS funds by expanding partnerships among the workforce investment system, and education, training and economic development communities; and 2) apply for other Federal and competitive grants to complement WIGS funds.

6. **Required Methods.** Grantees have considerable flexibility in conducting their work, but must meet certain methodological standards in collaborating with partners, consulting with customers, collecting data, and posting their products on the Internet.
 - a. **Partnerships.** In order to best serve their customers and optimize the Federal investment, grantees are to establish and maintain partnerships that grantees consider relevant and mutually beneficial. ETA believes that such partnerships can augment resources, improve program outcomes, and help LMI-WI data influence planning and program decisions.
 - b. **Customer consultation.** Wagner-Peyser §15(e)(2) (29 U.S.C. 491-2(e)(2)) requires states to consult with customers—including employers, WIBs, education agencies, and others—about the relevance of the LMI collected and disseminated. ETA does not prescribe how grantees consult customers, and methods can include focus groups, surveys, crowd-sourcing, Webinars, listening sessions, customer satisfaction assessments, and/or other methods considered appropriate by the grantee. Grantees must document these consultations in their grant file and annual performance report.
 - c. **Data collection and research methodology.** All data collection activities must conform to BLS technical standards and methodologies, except when the grantee documents a defensible rationale for an alternative. Information used in reports must 1) be based in part on needs identified through customer consultations and product assessments; and 2) come from credible sources that meet professional standards. Multiple sources must be used, except when the report is based upon a single survey. Sources must be clearly referenced and/or footnoted.
 - d. **Publication requirements.** In order to maximize the availability of LMI-WI products, grantees must post grant-funded products, reports, and workforce information on their Web sites in a readily accessible manner (unless otherwise indicated), and meet standard Federal accessibility requirements (www.section508.gov). To meet this criterion, grantees may use WIGS funding to develop, maintain, improve, and/or host LMI-WI Web sites and other electronic delivery systems.
 - e. **Information technology (IT) specifications.** To maximize its usefulness, any IT system or application developed with WIGS is to adhere to industry-standard, open architecture principles with documentation and software made available for use by other organizations for Federal governmental purposes.

7. Application for Federal Assistance, Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements.

- a. Application forms.** In accordance with TEGL 18-13 (see p. 8), states must submit through www.Grants.gov the SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) only. However, the PY14 WIGS application must include a copy of both the SF 424 and SF 424A (Budget Information). See both "Action Required" below and Attachment 2 for deadlines and other requirements. ETA regional offices will review and approve acceptable WIGS applications. Following regional office approval, the National Grant Officer issues a Notice of Obligation (NOO).
- b. Other standard forms and files.** ETA requires grantees to complete ETA Form 9130 quarterly financial reports, and to sign an annual funding agreement with ETA which includes grantee assurances and certifications. In addition, grantees must maintain their internal grant files in electronic form, and make these available upon request to ETA.
- c. Expenditures.** By accepting WIGS funding, a state agrees to fulfill all work specified in this guidance, including the deadlines. ETA expects grantees to expend WIGS funds during the July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 period, although carry-over is permitted. Grantees must expend the funds within a three-year period by June 30, 2017. During the performance period, the grantee and the ETA regional office may jointly adjust planned expenditures within the state's allotment. All WIGS expenditures must support the required and allowable activities, and conform to "reasonable," "necessary," and "allocable" costs specified in 29 CFR 97(Administrative Requirements) and OMB Circular A-87 (Cost Principles, see http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_circulars). WIGS cannot be used to supplant funding from other Federal or state sources.
- d. Annual performance report.** Grantees must submit an annual performance report to their ETA regional office that summarizes all grantee activities, and lists the core deliverables and activities shown below, in the order indicated.
 - i.** Workforce information database (WIDb)
 - ii.** Industry and occupational employment projections
 - iii.** Annual economic analysis and other reports
 - iv.** Customer consultations
 - v.** Activities undertaken to meet customer needs
 - vi.** New tools and resources
 - vii.** Efforts to create and support partnerships and collaborations
 - viii.** Activities to leverage LMI-WI funding
 - ix.** Recommendations to ETA for changes and improvements to WIGS requirements

In addition to providing a hyperlink or .docx version of the annual narrative report, states must also enter their narrative report into the WIGS Annual Narrative Report System (ANRS), whose implementation will occur after system programming and testing is complete. The states will receive instructions and a user's manual. The WIGS ANRS data fields follow the report outline shown above; states may copy and paste sections of the annual narrative into the ANRS data fields. The system's database will eventually

allow queries and reports for each of the nine data elements at the following geographic levels:

- national;
- ETA regional;
- selection of states grouped by small, medium, and large states, based on population; and
- selection by state name, to allow multi-state regional reports.

8. Additional Resources. ETA's Labor Market Information WIN-WIN Community of Practice (<https://winwin.workforce3one.org/page/home>) is the agency's principal repository of technical assistance resources to enhance the use of economic and workforce data. These resources include ETA's *Guide to State and Local Workforce Data* and references pertaining to skill shortages, mismatches and deficiencies; the identification of high growth and/or in-demand jobs; and how to understand and use data for important populations such as dislocated workers, persons with disabilities, veterans, and Native Americans. *ETA encourages the states to establish an Internet link somewhere on their LMI Web site to ETA's Labor Market Information WIN-WIN Community of Practice.*

9. Action Required. The state workforce agency (SWA) must submit the SF 424 to Grants.gov by May 30, 2014. The SWA must submit to the applicable ETA regional office by July 1, 2014 (unless a later date is negotiated with the regional office) an original and one copy of the PY 2014 WIGS application package, which must include a 1) transmittal letter; 2) a copy of the SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) submitted through www.Grants.gov in accordance with TEGL 18-13 (see p. 8); and 3) SF 424A (Budget Information). The transmittal letter must be signed by either 1) the governor or 2) both the SWA administrator and the state WIB chairperson.

10. Inquiries. For questions on grant requirements, contact the applicable ETA regional office. For financial management questions, contact the applicable ETA regional office; Grants Management Specialist Sharon Carter at Carter.Sharon@DOL.gov; or National Grant Officer Thomas Martin at Martin.Thomas@DOL.gov.

11. Attachments.

1. Workforce Information Grants to States, PY 2013 vs. PY 2014 Allotments
2. Consolidated Requirements for WIGS Grantees