

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION Workforce Information
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL DNPTTA/Workforce Information
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ADVISORY: TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 29-12

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: JANE OATES /s/
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Program Year (PY) 2013 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 for services to job seekers, employers, educators, economic developers, and others.

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 6, 7, 10(c), and 15 (29 U.S.C. 49e, 49f, 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. 2821(d)(8) and 49(l)(2))
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 27-11, May 2, 2012, *Program Year (PY) 2012 Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS): Policy and Program Guidance, Application Instructions, and Formula Allocations*

3. **OMB Approval.** To conform with the PRA, OMB has reviewed and approved this information collection (OMB Control Number 1205-0417), whose authorization expires May 31, 2014. 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.** ETA is awarding \$31,939,520 in PY 2013 for WIGS. ETA distributes a total of \$176,655 to Guam and the Virgin Islands, and allocates the remaining \$31,762,865 by formula to the states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. For the latter 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 2012. **Attachment 1 shows the allocations.** Hereafter, we have incorporated the District of Columbia and the territories into the term "state."

Each year the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) funds these LMI-WI formula grants to the states, 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 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.**

5. **Required, Encouraged, and Allowable Activities.** Grantees 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 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). ETA encourages states to produce additional reports (*d* 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 is a cornerstone of the nation's workforce investment and employment statistics systems. 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.

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 (www.xwalkcenter.org, or call 515-242-5034). 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, 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 Projections Managing Partnership (PMP) and its Projections Workgroup to produce all projections. To meet these requirements, ETA encourages grantees to use WIGS funding to obtain training provided by the PMP (see <http://dev.projectionscentral.com/>). Other LMI-WI staff training is also allowable using WIGS funds.

Type of industry and occupational projection	Required, encouraged and allowable activities	Applicable years for <i>this</i> TEGL
Statewide <i>long-term</i>	10-year projections required in odd-numbered calendar years	Projected to 2022, using a 2012 base year
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 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 2015, using a 2013 base year
Sub-state <i>long-term</i>	10-year projections required in even-numbered calendar years	NA (required next 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 Federal workforce investment system 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); critical 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 planning requirements specified on page 3 of <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 funded by Federal sources other than WIGS.

- d. Other 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 occupational and career guidance resources for job seekers (which may take the form of electronic self-service tools); 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 encouraged 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 how they carry out 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.** WIA Section 309(e)(2) requires states to consult with customers about the relevance of the LMI collected and disseminated, including employers; WIBs; education agencies; and others. 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, and if they do not, the grantee must document a defensible rationale. 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.** States must submit an SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) and SF 424A (Budget Information) to apply for this grant (see both “Action Requested” below and Attachment 2 for deadlines and other requirements). ETA regional offices review and approve WIGS applications. Following regional office approval, the ETA 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. The grant performance period spans July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014; ETA expects grantees to expend WIGS funds during this period. Grantees may request an alternative schedule from their ETA regional office, but must expend the funds within a three-year period by June 30, 2016, or the funds will be returned to the U.S. Treasury. During the performance period, the grantee and the ETA regional office may jointly adjust planned expenditures within the state's allotment. The ETA Grant Officer may reallocate grant funds within the ETA region if grantees' 1) expenditures and obligations are substantially below the forecasted levels; or 2) fail to complete required deliverables. All WIGS expenditures must support the required and allowable activities, and conform to "reasonable," "necessary," and "allocable" costs specified in 2 CFR 225. 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 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
- 8. Additional Resources.** The Workforce Information Council's (WIC) LMI Products and Customer Analysis tool can showcase state LMI-WI or research entity products and tools. Using pre-formatted spreadsheets, states can easily categorize their products and tools, identify the Web site location, and record information on views and downloads. By cross-referencing these tables with WIC's Customer Consultation Study Group product-customer matrix, states can better identify under-served customers and important unaddressed topics. WIC's reports and tools can be accessed at <http://www.workforceinfocouncil.org/library.asp>.
- 9. Action Requested.** ETA requests that state workforce administrators transmit this guidance to the appropriate state workforce agency (SWA) office(s) and the state WIB. The relevant state office should submit to the ETA Regional Administrator an original and one copy of the PY 2013 grant application package, which must include a 1) transmittal letter; 2) SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance); 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. The states must also submit the SF 424 to the Grants.gov Web site.

10. Inquiries. For questions on grant requirements and the statement of work, contact the appropriate ETA regional office. For financial management questions, contact the ETA regional office; Grants Specialist Sharon Carter at Carter.Sharon@DOL.gov; or Grant Officer Thomas Martin at Martin.Thomas@DOL.gov or (202) 693-2989.

11. Attachments.

1. Workforce Information Grants to States, PY 2012 vs. PY 2013 Allotments
2. Consolidated Requirements for WIGS Grantees