Purpose

Work Experience (WEX) is defined in Section 681.600 of the final rules for WIOA as follows:

“(a) Work experiences are a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experience may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate. A work experience may take place in the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act or applicable State law, exists.

Consistent with § 680.840 of this chapter, funds provided for work experiences may not be used to directly or indirectly aid in the filling of a job opening that is vacant because the former occupant is on strike, or is being locked out in the course of a labor dispute, or the filling of which is otherwise an issue in a labor dispute involving a work stoppage. Work experiences provide the youth participant with opportunities for career exploration and skill development.

(b) Work experiences must include academic and occupational education. The educational component may occur concurrently or sequentially with the work experience. Further academic and occupational education may occur inside or outside the work site.”

This policy only applies to those youth in summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, internships, and job shadowing.

Participant Selection Criteria

- Potentially open to WIOA youth enrollees at any level of employment plan
- Youth are assessed at a minimum through the NCWorks Objective Assessment (to determine needs), the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) (to determine academic level), and a Career Interest Inventory (to
determine workplace assignment). The local area also has access to WorkKeys, Prove-It, and a variety of other interest inventories if needed

- You must complete an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) with their case manager; based on this IEP and the above assessment, the case manager will determine if WEX is a suitable activity for meeting the goals and objectives in the IEP
- Youth WEX must be combined with other activities enhancing employability, including but not limited to academic and occupational education
- Completion of work readiness components as directed by career developer and identified in IEP
- Placement in occupational field consistent (where possible) with career objective identified in individual employment plan and with Career Interest Inventory assessment results

**Participant Requirements/Limitations**

- Maximum allowable hours for any individual in year-round subsidized work experience or internships are 150. This maximum can be waived on a case-by-case basis with written justification from contractor leadership. In addition, in the event of a summer youth WEX program the maximum hours may be extended to 200 with WDB leadership approval.
- Participants enrolled in skills training may participate in WEX as class schedule permits
- Balance of weekly time to be programmed by young adult case manager and may take place in conjunction with at least one of the following classroom-based activities: work readiness training, academic training and GED preparation, or occupational training
- Young adult case manager will evaluate activities on a regular basis – participants not adhering to the individual employment plan may be removed from WEX activity as appropriate
- Individuals participating in WEX must be compensated at the same rates, including periodic increases, as trainees, or employees who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills. The rates may not be lower than the higher of the federal or state minimum wage. Contract management staff will be responsible for approving wage rates after conducting sufficient labor market research. In the case of trainees, wage rates will be negotiated based on an appropriate training wage for the position. These wage rates will be monitored by the WDB.

**Worksite Organization Requirements/Limitations**

- Worksite organizations must complete the Worksite Agreement
• Worksite Agreement with the worksite organization must include individualized soft skill and/or skill-specific competency objectives, as appropriate for each participant, to be evaluated at completion of the work assignment. Monthly follow-up contact will be made to provide ongoing assistance.
• Youth WEX may not be used to encourage or induce relocation of a business. In the case of a business that has relocated resulting in job losses at the previous location, then WEX may not be used at that business for a minimum of 180 days
• Worksites must consent to regular monitoring visits designed to ensure adherence to policy
• Specific responsibilities of the worksite employer are detailed in the worksite supervisor manual.

Attachment A
• Youth WEX Worksite Request Form that is completed by potential worksite organizations

Attachment B
• Youth WEX Training Plan and Performance Evaluation Form