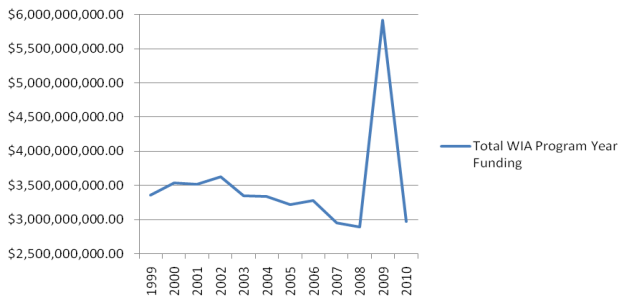


Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was passed in 1998, replacing the Job Training Partnership Act as the largest single source of federal funding for workforce development. Title I of WIA provides universal access to employment and training services through a network of one-stop workforce centers administered at the state and local levels. Title I also seeks to streamline services, promote customer choice on training, strengthen accountability standards for programs, and promote business leadership in service design.

States and municipalities have some discretion on how and where to spend their WIA allocations.

Total WIA Program Year Funding



The spike in the chart documents the influx of funds in 2009 due to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Besides that year, WIA funding has decreased steadily since 2002.

Funding and Administration

WIA funding is appropriated each year by Congress. The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) in the U.S. Department of Labor is the administering agency. They allocate funds to states based on a formula that compares the magnitude of unemployment for adults, dislocated workers, and youth in one state to the magnitude in other states. In order to receive funds states must have a utilization plan in place.

At the state level, WIA is governed by the state Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and administered by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). The state WIB develops the plan for WIA services and oversees the allocation of funding to Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) across the state.

At the local level, WIA is governed by the local WIBs, and in some cases by a local program administrator. In Chicago, for example, the Department of Family and Support Services is the local WIA administrator. Implementation varies slightly across LWIAs as each local WIB refines the state plans to match the needs of their own community.

Program Components

WIA-funded programs must provide three types of services, which are typically accessed sequentially.

- Core – General orientation, self-guided job search activities, access to information on job openings and required skills, eligibility determination, initial assessment.
- Intensive – Case management, job readiness training, basic skills education, employability check, and creation of individual employment plans.
- Training – Occupational skills training, on-the-job training, job readiness training, and customized training with employer partnerships. Training services are often administered to WIA registrants in the form of vouchers, or Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). In Illinois, 40% of adult and dislocated worker formula funds must be used for training.

Core services can be provided to anyone, while intensive and training services are reserved for those meeting income and other guidelines.

Each local WIB allocates funding to one-stop delivery locations (Illinois WorkNet Centers), and possibly other providers, to offer the three levels of services. At the centers individuals can apply for training programs and gain access to other services related to employment. Services and structure may differ between centers and LWIAs. In Chicago, it is important to note services are provided through affiliate agencies and two sector centers. Affiliates are community-based organizations providing assistance to hard-to-serve populations and underserved neighborhoods. The two sector centers focus on specific industry sectors – manufacturing and service.

Funding serves three distinct populations: *adults, youth, and dislocated workers.*

Populations Served

WIA programs are designed to serve two customers – job seeker and employer. Job seeker categories include adults (individuals 18 and older), dislocated workers (laid-off workers), and youth. Youth are separated into two categories – in-school and out-of-school. While the youth category typically applies to low-income individuals between ages 14 and 21, LWIAs may choose to target a more specific group. For example, in Chicago, youth must be between ages 16 and 21.

Organizational Eligibility

Community agencies, educational institutions, and other non-profit and for-profit entities with experience in providing workforce development services can apply to become a provider of WIA services. Eligible providers must demonstrate the capacity to work cooperatively with the wide range of WIA partners. Additionally, community colleges, private training organizations, and apprenticeship programs in each local workforce area can apply for status as a WIA-certified training provider. This certification allows these entities to accept ITA vouchers from participants and receive payment for providing training services.

For more information see this brief from the National Skills Coalition http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/reports/tpib/nsc_tpib_wia_titlei.pdf

If you have questions contact the Chicago Jobs Council at (312) 252-0460 or visit us at <http://www.cjc.net>.