



## County of Mercer Workforce Development Board

Mailing Address: 640 South Broad Street, PO Box 8068, Trenton NJ 08650-0068

Administrative Offices Location: 26 Yard Avenue, Trenton NJ 08609

Phone: 609 989-6824 ■ Email: wdb@mercercounty.org



Virgen Velez  
Acting Director

Brian M. Hughes  
County Executive

Keith Secrest  
Chairperson

# Mercer WDB Policy: Work-Based Learning Adopted: November 1, 2022

**Background:** WIOA Sections 680.700 through 680.850 and Section 134 detail requirements for each Local Workforce Development area to have a policy for the implementation of Work-Based Training agreements / contracts, including On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Registered Apprenticeship training, Transitional Jobs, Customized Training, paid or unpaid Work Experience, Pre-Apprenticeship Training, and Job Shadowing.

**Policy:** The Mercer WDB recognizes the need for Work-Based Training opportunities to be available for jobseekers as a complementary activity to occupational and/or job readiness training and also as a stand-alone activity to enhance the employment and career opportunities of our jobseekers. These opportunities must be identified as an appropriate activity for program participants in their Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The MCOTES staff will work in partnership with the NJDOL Business Services Representative, WFNJ OJT writers, and the County Economic Development Department to ensure coordination and streamlining of these services to employers and avoid duplication of services.

## Definitions/Procedures:

**On-the-Job Training** – Training by an employer that is provided to a participant while engaged in productive work in a job that—

- Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
- Is made available through a program that provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 75 percent of the wage rate of the participant, except as provided in section 134(c)(3)(H), for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and
- Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.

**Registered Apprenticeship** – An "Earn and Learn" training model, providing a combination of structured learning with on-the-job training from an assigned mentor. Related instruction, technical training or other certified training is provided by apprenticeship training centers, technical schools, community colleges, and/or institutions employing distance and computer-based learning approaches. The goal is to provide workers with advanced skillsets that meet the specific needs of employers. Upon completion of a Registered Apprenticeship program, participants receive an industry issued, nationally recognized credential, that certifies occupational proficiency and is portable.

Employers who provide related instructions with Registered Apprenticeship programs can provide formal in-house instructions as well as the on-the-job training at the worksite. Employers can use an outside educational provider for the classroom instruction. Employers can use two- or four-year post-secondary institutions, technical training schools or on-line courses for related instructions. The employer is the Eligible Training Provider and must identify its

instructional provider. For multiple year apprenticeships, funding to cover the costs of related training will be negotiated and obligated by semester or applicable certification, but not more than six months at a time.

**Transitional jobs** –Time-limited subsidized work experiences that help individuals who are chronically unemployed and have barriers to employment establish a work history and develop skills to access unsubsidized employment and progress in the workplace. Transitional jobs may be provided in the private-for-profit sector, community & faith-based agencies, and in governmental agencies.

**Work Experience** – Paid (subsidized) or unpaid work experience is a planned, structured learning experience in a workplace for a limited period of time that provide participants with opportunities for career exploration and skill development. Work Experience can be provided to adults & dislocated workers as a complementary activity to occupational training when appropriate. WIOA Youth program participants will participate in work experience with integrated education and training activities occurring concurrently and contextually with the work-based training. (WIOA sec. 129 (c)(2)(E). Work Experience may be provided in the private-for-profit sector, community & faith-based agencies, and in governmental agencies. Wages will be paid at the same entry-level rate that paid trainees or employees in the same or similar positions at the worksite. No position will be paid less than the state of New Jersey current minimum wage. The worksite supervisor is expected to provide supervision and training for participants, as well as monitor progress and application of job readiness skills.

**Incumbent Worker Training** - Section 134 (d) (4) of WIOA permits local areas, with Board approval, to reserve and not use more than 20 percent of allocated Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to pay for the training costs of Incumbent Workers. NJWIN WD-PY21-4 issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor on Dec. 16, 2021, offers further guidance for local boards on Incumbent Working Training. Wages will be paid at the same entry-level rate that paid trainees or employees in the same or similar positions at the worksite. No position will be paid less than the state of New Jersey current minimum wage. The worksite supervisor is expected to provide supervision and training for participants, as well as monitor progress and application of job readiness skills.

**Pre-Apprenticeship** – A program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in registered apprenticeship programs and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, registered apprenticeship programs(s).

#### **Customized Training**

- Customized training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers.
- The employer(s) must pay not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training.
- Employer matching costs must be in cash, or in-kind, must be documented, and are subject to audit.
- Customized training may be provided to WIOA program participants eligible for training services.
- The employer (or group of employers) must commit to hire individuals who successfully complete the customized training program and trainees must agree to accept employment offers from the employer.
- The employer groups will assist WIOA staff in identifying appropriate training providers. As appropriate, local procurement of training providers will occur.
- An agreement between WIOA, the training provider and the employer (or group of employers) will be finalized and signed prior to the start of training.

A customized training contract may also be written to train a customer who is already working for the employer (or group of employers) for which the customized training is being provided, when the employee is not earning a self-sufficient wage. In this situation, customized training provided to a previously employed worker must elevate the employee to reach at least a self-sufficient wage through skill upgrade training that relates to either: the introduction by the employer of new technologies; the introduction to new production or service procedures; or Upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills/workplace literacy.