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Policy Letter #27

TO: All Cumberland County Workforce Development Service Providers

FROM: Tracy Jackson, Interim Director

SUBJECT: Serving Immediate Family Members, Close Acquaintances, and Other Stakeholders in WIOA Training Programs

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance on the requirements and procedures that ensure all individuals enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program have been determined eligible, assessed, and served in an ethical manner that is free from any real or perceived conflict of interest.

Local WDBs and NCWorks Career Center staff must follow and be aware of all applicable federal, state, and local conflict of interest requirements when providing services (directly or indirectly) funded by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) resources. WDB and staff must be committed to maintaining the highest standard of ethical conduct and to guard against problems arising from real, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.

POLICY

The WIOA program, while not an entitlement, should be accessible to any individual who is eligible and suitable for services available in the local area, subject to Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) policies and procedures. However, when applicants have a close relationship with the WIOA staff, management, and other specific stakeholders of the workforce development system, attention must be given to ensure access to program services is not based upon this relationship or political influence. It is possible that even without an intention to misuse WIOA funds, the decision to enroll an individual in the program could be perceived as improper and cause potential non-compliance with state and/or federal law.

A general authorization for providing funds to participants will comply with the standards of conduct for maintaining the integrity of the program and avoiding any conflict of interest in its administration. Local Chief Elected Officials, Local Workforce Development Boards, designated fiscal agents, and administrative officials must help meet the objectives of WIOA through effective policies, procedures, and safeguards that ensure the integrity of these public

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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities

funds. Throughout the Local Workforce Development Areas, safeguards must be in place ensuring that all those served in the program are not only eligible and suitable but also detached from being part of the perception of impropriety or conflict of interest.

In the event a service provider/contractor is related to a WDB staff member or officer, appropriate firewalls must be in place to ensure that staff member/officer does not directly monitor, supervise, or provide oversight. An alternate staff member/officer must be identified to assume the oversight responsibilities.

All local WDB members, WIOA sub-recipients and/or contractors and other Career Center staff must sign and attest to the Local WDB Conflict of Interest Policy (See Policy #26 Conflict of Interest Requirements for Workforce Development Boards, Staff, and Contractors). Signed Conflict of Interest Policies must be maintained at the local office.

Attachment A: Procedure

Creation Date

December 2017

Revised Date

July 2020

PROCEDURE

The following procedure will be used when determining eligibility for training services:

1. All customers interested in WIOA training services must be asked, during the intake process, to disclose if a relationship exists with any parties/stakeholders of the Cumberland County Workforce Development system to include WDB executive staff members or supervisors, WIOA employees, Workforce Development Board members, WDB committee and/or subcommittee members, Cumberland County Career Center partners, WIOA sub-recipients and/or contractors, local elected officials, Cumberland County employees, and other community stakeholders.
2. If the customer has identified a relationship with one of the above-mentioned parties/stakeholders, after eligibility and suitability is determined, the intake is routed to the Workforce Development Director for review and approval. If the relationship exists with the Workforce Development Director, the intake is routed to the Cumberland County Assistant County Manager for review and approval. The reported relationship must be documented in case notes; applicable approval decisions must also be documented in case notes and supporting documentation of approval uploaded into NCWorks.
3. Training and supportive service decisions are made following local policy.
4. All individual cases determined to have an existing relationship with one of the above mentioned parties/stakeholders may be included in any and all programmatic and financial reviews/monitoring. This includes the annual programmatic and financial monitoring conducted by the North Carolina Department of Workforce Solutions.