



# WIOA Basic Skills Deficient

September 11th, 2023

# Objective

The primary objective of this presentation is to discuss the various ways an individual could meet the criteria of Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) and to demonstrate the various ways the BSD criteria could be recorded as part of a client's WIOA application within Career Connect (CC)

# WIOA Definition

## Basic Skills Deficient - with respect to an individual—

- (A) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- (B) who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

# Basic Skills Deficient

Under WIOA, Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) has eligibility/priority criteria under both the Adult and Youth titles.

- Under the Adult title, if an eligible client is determined BSD, the client is considered a priority.
  - If a client meets BSD criteria, it is equal to the priority an Adult client receives for meeting WIOA Low Income criteria.
- Under the Youth titles (In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth), being BSD is a barrier that is part of the Youth eligibility criteria.

# Federal Guidance

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16 - Guidance on Services Provided through Adult and Dislocated Worker under WIOA - dated March 8th, 2017.
- TEGL 09-22 - WIOA Title IB Youth Formula Guidance - dated March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023.
- TEGL 21-16 - Third WIOA Title I Youth Formula Guidance - dated March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017.
  - Change 1 to TEGL 21-16 was issued July 31st, 2021 - Deals with updated process for Determining Low Income for Youth Living in a High Poverty Area.
- TEGL 07-20 - Implementation of Priority of Service in WIOA Adults - dated November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

# Understanding the ePolicy Manual

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Employment and Training (OET) utilizes a WIOA ePolicy portal where all current and new guidance issued by the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) and OET will be maintained.

Homepage: [www.illinoisworknet.com/DCEOPolicies](http://www.illinoisworknet.com/DCEOPolicies)

**Guiding Innovation**  
Illinois WIOA Policy

Policy Chapters & Sections    A-Z Listing    Archived Policy    Print Policy

As the Governor's designated agency for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 Workforce Development Activities and the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, the Department of Commerce Office of Employment and Training (OET) provides policy and guidance to the Local Workforce Innovation Boards for the delivery of workforce services. The ePolicy manual contains this policy, related documents, and resources to support the implementation and provision of service under WIOA. To keep up on the latest information, please subscribe to e-mail notifications of any policy issuances and updates.

ePolicy Chapters and Sections    A-Z    Archive    Print

ePolicy Chapters and Sections

# State Policy Guidance

- Office of Employment and Training (OET) WIOA ePolicy Chapter 4.2 - Career Planning -3-14 -2023
- OET WIOA ePolicy Chapter 5.2 -Adult Eligibility - 12-8-21
- OET WIOA ePolicy Chapter 5.4 - Youth Eligibility - 5-11-23
- OET WIOA ePolicy Chapter 5.6 - Service Priorities - 12-8-21
- OET WIOA ePolicy Chapter 5.9 - Basic Skills Deficiency Assessment Requirements - 5-17-23

# Local Policy/Guidance

- Besides the guidance in Federal and State Policies, each Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) has the latitude to establish additional Local Policy Guidance.
- Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership does an exceptional job conducting tailored virtual trainings/webinars and has developed a Staff Training Guide that can be accessed on the Career Connect Zen Desk: [LINK:  
https://workforceboard.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/7760807734541--WIOA-Staff-Training-Guide-Worksheet](https://workforceboard.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/7760807734541--WIOA-Staff-Training-Guide-Worksheet) (See next slide)

# Local Policy/Guidance



## Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership

### WIOA

## Training Guide

### PURPOSE FOR THE TRAINING GUIDE

To assist agencies with the following:

- Navigating Career Connect Help Desk
- Onboarding New Agency/Staff
- Refresher /Crash Course

Access Career Connect Help Desk at: <https://workforceboard.zendesk.com/hc/en-us>

The help desk is a website where the partnership houses state and local policies and procedures. We refer to this as our electronic library where you can find forms, documents and webinars and submit a help desk ticket.

# Local Policy/Guidance

- Besides the guidance in Federal and State Policies, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, also known as LWIA 7 has guidance related to Youth Basic Skills Assessment procedure on the Zen Desk that was updated **7/31/2023:**
- Direct link: <https://workforceboard.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/4404047986317->

## Articles in this section

UPDATED 7/31/2023:  
Adult/DW Basic Skills  
Assessment Procedure  
(Effective 7-1-2021)

UPDATED 7/31/2023: Youth  
Basic Skills Assessment  
Procedure (Effective 7-1-  
2021)

1N & 1E Eligibility & Service  
Procedure

Career Exploration  
Procedure (Updated  
3/28/2023)

Case Note Guidance  
Document (Updated  
2/6/2023)

Closure/Exit Procedure  
(Updated 3/17/2023)

Credential Procedure  
(Updated 4/7/2023)

File Destruction Procedure

High Poverty Area Procedure  
(UPDATED 7/1/2021)

## UPDATED 7/31/2023: Youth Basic Skills Assessment Procedure (Effective 7-1-2021)



Dominic Martin  
23 days ago · Updated

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**7/31/2023: Please see updated Basic Skills Screening Tool. The new version now asks for the last 4 of the SSN. DOB has been removed.**

### Policy

This Procedure augments the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) policy, section 5.9 on how to assess basic skills for WIOA eligibility and training suitability. **Please read the DCEO full policy in addition to this procedure.** To access the DCEO policy:

1. Go to the WIOA Works Policy portal: <https://apps.illinoisworknet.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Print>
2. Make sure you are on the "Print" tab.
3. Click on the ">" symbol next to "Chapter 5. Program Eligibility" to expand the sections.
4. Check the box next to section 5.9-Basic Skills Deficiency Assessment Requirements
5. Click the "Print" icon and print to a pdf.
6. To access the attachments to the policy, go to the "ePolicy Chapters and Sections" tab and click on the 5.9 link. Use the right-hand menus to expand and access Technical Assistance Resources, Policy/References, Attachments, and Forms.

# Local Policy/Guidance

- Besides the guidance in Federal and State Policies, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, also known as LWIA 7 has guidance related to Adult/DW Basic Skills Assessment procedure on the **Zen Desk that was updated 7-31-2023.**
- Direct Link: <https://workforceboard.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/4405029111181->

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# Webinar on Basic Skills

Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership staff have done an exceptional job of conducting various webinar/virtual trainings and in March 2021, they conducted a webinar on Basic Skills & Objective Assessment Refresher. If you were not able to participate in the original webinars/virtual training, it was recorded and is posted on the Career Connect Zen Desk, under WIOA Programs a Career Coaching: Customer Flow Webinar Series:

**[Session 2: Basic Skills & Objective Assessment Refresher presented on March 2, 2021](#)**

Session 2 provides a refresher of the Basic Skills and Objective Assessment Summary. The slides from the webinar are attached. The recorded webinar is available at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/5278805216342930440>

# Different Ways to Be Determined Basic Skills Deficient (BSD)

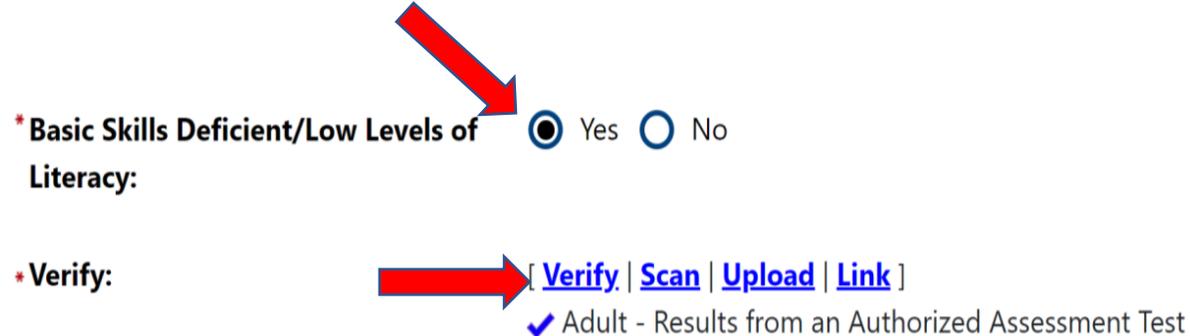
- If an individual scores at or below 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Level on either their Math or Reading Assessment test they would be determined BSD.
- In OET WIOA ePolicy Chapter 5.9 - Basic Skills Deficiency Assessment Requirements, it includes an alternative way an individual can be determined BSD by using a Basic Skills Screening Tool.
- Lastly, if an individual is assessed as an English Language Learner (ELL), they could also be determined to meet BSD criteria.

# Basic Skills Deficient due to Testing

If the client was determined BSD due to assessment tests (scoring at or below 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Level), then a hard copy of the assessment tests scoring sheet indicating the Category of Test (Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language or Other), type of test (Math or Reading), the date of test, grading (including the scale score and Grade Level Equivalency) must be in the hard copy file that support BSD criteria.

# Within Career Connect

If you have an assessment test dated on or prior to the clients WIOA application date that would support the client being BSD, you record “Yes” to the Basic Skills Deficient/Low Levels of Literacy question, then for the documentation under “verify”, the documentation would be the “Results from an Authorized Assessment Test”.



\* Basic Skills Deficient/Low Levels of Literacy:  Yes  No

\* Verify: [ [Verify](#) | [Scan](#) | [Upload](#) | [Link](#) ]  
✓ Adult - Results from an Authorized Assessment Test

# Recording GLE

An important detail that I have been asked to stress, when assessment tests are being recorded on a client in Career Connect, even though the Grade Level Equivalency (GLE) is not required field on the screen, **you must record** the clients accurate GLE to get proper credit for Federal Reporting.

# Determining BSD due to Tests

Key points to understand about determining BSD due to assessment tests within Career Connect.

- A client will be determined BSD with a score at or below 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Level on either the math or reading assessment tests, if the tests are dated on or before the client's application date:
  - Note - for an Adult client, valid assessment tests must be dated within one year of the application date
  - Note - for a Youth client, the assessment tests must be dated within six months of the application date

# Basic Skills Screening Tool

- We will now transition to the next way a client could be determined BSD
- Based on guidance in OET WIOA ePolicy Chapter 5.9 - Basic Skills Deficiency Assessment Requirements - 5-17-23:
  - Attachment “A” within this policy is a Basic Skills Screening Tool
  - If a client has a response of “No” to any of the questions on the screening tool, they would be determined BSD

# Purpose of Screening Tool

- It is important to understand, the screening tool does not take the place of assessment testing
- The purpose of the screening tool is to capture the criteria under the second part of the “Basic Skills Deficient” definition which is “a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society.”

# Basic Skills Screening Tool



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

## Basic Skills Screening Tool

Name:

Last 4 of SSN:

- 1) Do you have a high school diploma, General Education Development (GED) certificate or High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)?  Yes  No  Currently in high school (does not include GED or HSED programs)
- 2) Can you follow basic written instructions and diagrams with no help or just a little help?  Yes  No
- 3) Can you fill out basic medical forms and job applications?  Yes  No
- 4) Without the aid of a calculator, can you add, subtract, multiply and divide with whole numbers up to 3 digits?  Yes  No
- 5) Can you do basic tasks on a computer?  Yes  No
- 6) Do you speak and read English well enough to get and keep a job?  Yes  No

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Signed:

# Basic Skills Screening Tool

- Within Career Connect, on the “Barriers” screen within the application, is where the question has been added when a client is being determined BSD due to the new screening tool.
- If any question on the screening tool is answered “No” by the client, then the question on the “Barrier” screen in Career Connect of **“Basic Skills Deficient/Low Levels of Literacy”** should be answered “Yes”; (see example on next slide).

# Basic Skills Screening Tool

## *In Career Connect:*

- 1) On the Barriers screen of the WIOA Application, set Basic Skills Deficient to “Yes” or “No” based on the tool.
- 2) If yes, select “Completed, signed and dated Basic Skills Screening Tool” as the verification.

\* **Basic Skills Deficient/Low Levels of Literacy:**  Yes  No 

\* **Verify:** [ [Verify](#) | [Scan](#) | [Upload](#) | [Link](#) ]  
✓ Completed, signed & dated Basic Skills Screening Tool (Adult, DW or Youth)

- 3) Add a Case Note with the Subject: “BSD Assessed with Screening Tool” and include the following in the Case Note description:
  - the date of the screening,
  - whether or not the client was determined basic skills deficient, and
  - if the client is basic skills deficient, how the individual’s deficiency will be addressed.
- 4) Place a completed, signed copy of the document in the individual’s file.

# Case Note in Career Connect Required

Please note, when any WIOA client is being determined Basic Skills Deficient due to one or more “No” responses by the client on the Basic Skills Screen Tool, the guidance below must be followed:

- 3) Add a Case Note with the Subject: “BSD Assessed with Screening Tool” and include the following in the Case Note description:
  - the date of the screening,
  - whether or not the client was determined basic skills deficient, and
  - if the client is basic skills deficient, how the individual’s deficiency will be addressed.
- 4) Place a completed, signed copy of the document in the individual’s file.

# Basic Skills Screening Tool

- If a client is being indicated as meeting BSD criteria due to the Basic Skills Screening tool, the only acceptable documentation to support this criteria is the completed screening tool (with one or more response(s) of “No” indicated on the tool).
- The screening tool must have been signed and dated by the client and the bottom portion of the screening tool must be completed by Career Planer staff (see example of bottom of tool on next slide.)



# Bottom Portion of the Basic Skills Screening Tool

Must be signed and dated by the Career Planner:

For Internal Use Only:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Was the individual able to complete the screening tool without help? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No   |   |
| <p><b>For the Adult Program Only:</b></p> <p>If any question is answered, "No" or the form could not be completed independently, the individual should receive priority.</p> <p>Does the individual receive priority?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p><b>For the Youth Program Only:</b></p> <p>If any question is answered, "No" or the form could not be completed independently, the individual has an eligibility barrier.</p> <p>Does the individual have an eligibility barrier?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> |
| Name of Career Planner: _____   |   |
| Career Planner<br>Signature: _____  | Date Signed: _____  |

Revised July 31, 2023

September 11th, 2023

# BSD Criteria

- We have now covered how an individual could be determined BSD due to assessment testing.
- We have also covered how an individual could be determined BSD utilizing the Basic Skills Screening tool.
- One last way an individual could be determined BSD is, if an individual is assessed as an English Language Learner (ELL).

# English Language Learner

The term “English Language Learner” when used with respect to an eligible individual, means an eligible individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or comprehending the English language, and

- (A) whose native language is a language other than English; or
- (B) who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

# Where ELL in Recorded Career Connect

- Within Career Connect, on the “Barriers” tab within the application, is a question, “Do you primarily speak a language other than English?”
- If the question is populated with a “Yes”, the client will meet the barrier as an English Language Learner (ELL). (See example on next slide.)

# English Language Learner

## Ethnic Origin

- \* Are you of Hispanic or Latino heritage?  Yes  No  I do not wish to answer.
- \* Race - Please check all that apply:
- African American/Black
  - American Indian/Alaskan Native
  - Asian
  - Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
  - White
  - I do not wish to answer.

## Language

Do you primarily speak a language other than English?

Yes  No 

- \* What is that language?
- \* How well do you speak that language?
- \* Do you require English language assistance?  Yes  No
- \* How well do you speak English?  !

# English Language Learner

- If “Yes” to the ELL question, the client must indicate a language of preference as part of WIOA Federal reporting criteria.
- If none of the languages listed are the “Language of Preference, then the block below allows the Career Planner to record the language “Other”.

## Language

Do you primarily speak a language other than English?  Yes  No

\*What is that language?

Cantonese

\*How well do you speak that language?

Very Well

\*Do you require English language assistance?

Yes  No

\*How well do you speak English?

I speak and understand English well enough to communicate

# Overview of the Three Different Ways to Record BSD

To recap, an individual could meet WIOA criteria of Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) three different ways:

- Scoring at or below 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Level on either a math or reading pre-assessment tests.
- Due to a “No” response to any question on the Basic Skills Screening tool.
- If an individual is assessed as an English Language Learner.

# Recording Assessment Tests

To reiterate, when assessment tests are being recorded on a client in Career Connect, even though the Grade Level Equivalency (GLE) is not required field on the screen, **you must record** the clients accurate GLE to get proper credit for Federal Reporting.

# Overview

Under WIOA, Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) has eligibility/priority criteria under both the Adult and Youth titles.

- If a qualified WIOA Adult client meets any of the three BSD criteria discussed in the previous slide, they would be considered a priority client under WIOA.
- Under the Youth titles (In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth), meeting any of the three BSD criteria is a barrier that is part of the Youth eligibility criteria.



# Additional Training Opportunities

## Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Professional Development

The Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support (ICSPS) assists in facilitating WIOA professional development. WIOA Professional Development webinars are available to assist one-stop operators, WIOA administrators, WIOA core partners, and other service providers. This includes weekly Workforce Wednesday Webinars, the WIOA Summit, and a variety of other professional development opportunities. Be sure to join the ICSPS email listserv at <https://icsps.forms-db.com/view.php?id=149615> to receive announcements and participate in upcoming training.

# Questions

- This concludes the presentation on WIOA Basic Skills Deficient criteria and the ways to record this criteria.
- Please contact your Regional Manager or Project Coordinator for any questions.