

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act

FACT SHEET

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (commonly known as the Opportunity Act) was signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2014 and took effect in July 2015.

WIOA is landmark legislation that is designed to strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system and help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into quality jobs and careers and help employers hire and retain skilled workers.

WIOA's goals and expectations

WIOA was designed to improve the quality of the workforce, increase economic self-sufficiency, reduce welfare dependency, meet employer skill requirements, and enhance the nation's productivity and competitiveness.

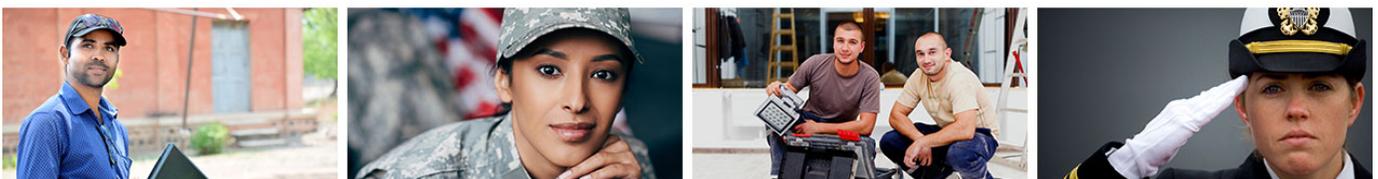
Gov. Jay Inslee established clear goals for implementing the Opportunity Act:

- Help more people find and keep jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency, with a focus on disadvantaged populations.
- Close skill gaps for employers, with a focus on in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- Work together as a single, seamless team to make this happen.

WIOA was designed to enhance the nation's productivity and competitiveness

Washington state's WIOA workforce plan, called Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP), identifies the intended strategies to spark innovation and outlines how our workforce system serves job seekers and employers. TAP details new ways to:

1. Strengthen business engagement to boost employer productivity and profitability.
2. Streamline customer service so people can reach their goals, no matter their barriers or background.
3. Broaden system accessibility for all job seekers, using technology when appropriate.
4. Build a next-generation performance accountability system to measure our impact.



The TAP plan was developed through a broadly represented and comprehensive planning process by statewide stakeholders, including the State Workforce Development Board, Workforce Development Councils, the Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board, and the state departments of Employment Security, Social & Health Services, and Services for the Blind.

Every local Workforce Development Council has developed and is implementing its own strategic plan and related efforts aligned with the state's strategic plan.

The Opportunity Act is designed to:

- Increase access to and opportunities for jobs, education and training to help individuals — particularly those with barriers— succeed in the labor market.
- Better align workforce investment, education and economic development programs to support an accessible, high-quality workforce development system.
- Improve the labor-market relevance of workforce investment, education and economic development efforts to provide:
 - Washington's workers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in family-wage jobs, and
 - Employers with the skilled workers they need to succeed in a global economy.

- Improve the delivery of services through Washington's workforce development system to better address the needs of workers, job seekers and employers.
- Streamline 100 varying and incompatible state performance accountability measures to ones focused on workforce outcomes; total number of people entering employment, including short- and long-term employment rates; earnings; credential completion; skill gains; and effectiveness in serving employers.
- Increase the prosperity of Washington's workers and employers.

View [WIOA quarterly performance reports](#), statewide and by Workforce Development Area.

