

	<b>New Jersey Workforce Memo</b>	
	<b>Issued By:</b>	Workforce Development Division of Career Services
	<b>Issued Date:</b>	February 9, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Frequently Asked Questions – PY21 OJT Allocations and Mandatory Training Funds

**NJDOL has compiled the following FAQ in response to specific questions that local areas have posed regarding the recent NOA for On-the-Job Training (OJT), as well as the requirement to provide training funds to support NJDOL and GSETA’s new training partnership.**

**1. Is the NOA that we just received for OJT only, or can it be used for other work-based opportunities like Transitional Jobs or Incumbent Worker Training?**

The funds provided through the NOA are specifically to support OJTs for dislocated workers. These funds have been allocated from Rapid Response money which supports dislocated workers. However, we hope and expect that local areas will also utilize existing WIOA allocations to support OJTs for adult and youth populations, as well as to provide additional work-based learning opportunities through existing WIOA allocations.

**2. Does the money that each local area is contributing for Staff Training come out of OJT allocation or general WIOA funds? Do we have to pay for this training if we already have experience providing OJTs?**

The participation in and contribution to this training is mandatory. Through this training series, NJDOL seeks to ensure that staff across the state have access to common and consistent information regarding on-the-job training opportunities and their implementation. Based on local area’s current spend-down levels, we believe local areas have resources to cover the training amount. However, if you have any concerns about financial hardship in paying for the training, please reach out to NJDOL.

**3. Do you have an idea when the staff training will be scheduled for OJT?**

NJDOL is working with EDSI and GSETA to establish a date and aiming for early/mid-March. We expect that this training series will include different sessions that support training for WDB leadership, program staff, fiscal staff, business services staff at the local and state levels, and Employment Services staff.

**4. For the OJT funding that we just received, is any of the money allowed to be used for staff (program) or admin costs?**

Local WDB budgets should follow your local area's priorities. ITAs are core to many of our programs. We anticipate that OJTs can and will be just as core in our workforce programs moving forward. This requires more than hiring capacity to do this work, and we encourage local areas to consider the integration of this into the work streams of many of your current employees. While local areas are not prohibited from hiring staff, hiring decisions should align with specific strategic and operational goals that include a focus on work-based learning.

**5. Would it be possible to obtain an email with a synopsis of the purpose for offering OJT training?**

As a state, expanding OJT opportunities has been and remains a key goal. We believe OJTs offer (1) an opportunity to expand who we serve, and (2) to serve as an effective tool in connecting jobseekers to meaningful employment. Through our existing OJT policy, this new allocation, and our upcoming training, we hope that we can help support your local area in building out more on-the-job training for individuals in WIOA services.

**6. What is the source of curriculum and the learning outcomes anticipated?**

Curriculum and learning opportunities should be identified uniquely in each OJT contract based on employer skill needs and participant skill growth opportunities. The development of training plans is an area that we will cover more in training.

**7. What are the qualifications required of training providers?**

The training can be provided by the employer directly. If working with an outside vendor for any portion of the OJT, ETPL providers are not required.

**8. Will we be able to extend this funding into PY22?**

We anticipate that you might not be able to spend all the money provided to you in this allocation. While you will have to return any unspent allocations at the end of the year, NJDOL plans to provide a new allocation in PY22 specifically for supporting implementation of OJTs in the new program year.

**9. How can we – the state and local areas – better align the variety of OJT opportunities available to employers and minimize competition across programs in our outreach to employers?**

At the state level, we are working to streamline our business services engagement. Specifically, local Workforce Development Boards have the opportunity to align state business services staff into their operational models, including state business representatives and OJT writers, as relevant. As we continue to look for opportunities to expand on-the-job training opportunities for jobseekers in

NJ, we recognize that many relationships and points of engagement exist at the local and/or regional level, and we intend for our state-level staff to contribute to local strategic directions.

We will continue to work as a state to develop materials and resources regarding OJTs available through different funding sources. We also know that specific local areas are already implementing business engagement strategies that integrate these OJT streams into a streamlined set of processes for employers. Our WIOA POD team can help connect different local areas to learn from one another.

**10. How do you suggest that we address the higher level of expectation laid out in the OJT policy for WIOA contracts – much more detail is required for WIOA OJT contracts than state contracts, e.g., past OJT experience, following up on employer experience?**

Much of the information that is identified for collection in NJDOL's OJT policy can be designed as part of your business engagement strategy – from establishing the specific design of on-the-job training opportunities to obtaining feedback about the employer's satisfaction with their experiences. A business engagement relationship that focuses on relationships and not paperwork will also help to secure the required information.

**11. What is the value of WIOA OJT to my local area?**

WIOA offers a reliable source of revenue that your local area maintains direction around. Through WIOA-funded OJTs, local areas can drive their own work-based learning strategies. State money is subject to variations and rules set at the state level.

**12. What is your perspective of providing OJTs to referrals that come directly from employers?**

Employer referrals (reverse referrals) are not the ideal method for establishing OJT contracts. In many of these cases, the employer may be planning to hire the person anyway. Our recommendation is to target OJT opportunities to individuals who are currently participating in WIOA career services and training opportunities. At minimum, if a reverse referral is made, the possibility of WIOA eligibility should be determined. Through WIOA services your local area may be able to support additional needs that the referred individual might have. However, the primary audience for OJTs should be individuals who are already connected to WIOA services and supporting these individuals' connection to meaningful work situations.

**13. Can we use OJT funds in conjunction with other training funds, for example provide an ITA and then an OJT to the same person?**

Yes, in fact this is an ideal sequence. For someone who doesn't have the necessary skills and experience, ITAs might offer needed skill development, but not specific work experience. OJTs allow for an employer to work directly with a new employee to offer them additional work-based skill-development opportunities as part of their onboarding. The subsidized wage is meant to support this type of intentional on-the-job skill development through the employer.

**14. Will information be provided to the Office of Internal Audit regarding OJTs and what is allowable?**

NJDOL's Career Services team will work with OIA to ensure that our program and fiscal monitoring teams have a good understanding of the new investments in OJT and their differing requirements.