

DRAFT

District of Columbia Department of Employment Services Program Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)		
DOES-Policy No.	Subject	Date
XXXX-2012	Individual Training Accounts	September 2012

SCOPE

An Individual Training Account (ITA) is a training authorization given to American Job Center customers who demonstrate need and are approved for occupational skills training to become gainfully employed or re-employed. Under Title I of WIA, with consultation from their assigned Employment Specialist, Adult and Dislocated workers select occupational skills training services from eligible providers. The Individual Training Account represents a cornerstone of self-determination established by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

REFERENCE

- Workforce Investment Act of 1998 – Title I
- Federal Register Part II; WIA Final Rules – Subpart D, Individual Training Accounts

PURPOSE

To provide guidance and information regarding ITA services with costs and training duration limits as established by the District, with concurrence from the District's State and Local Board and the Workforce Investment Council (WIC). WIA regulations permit the District to create limitations for cost and training duration under the following sections:

- a. 663.4209(a) – The State or Local Board may impose limits on ITAs, such as limitations on the dollar amount and/or duration
- b. 663.420(b)(2) – There may be a policy decision by the State Board or Local Board to establish a range of amounts and/or a maximum amount applicable to all ITAs
- c. 663.420(d) – An individual may select training that costs more than the maximum amount available for ITAs under a State or local policy when other sources of funds are available to supplement the ITA. These others sources may include Pell Grants, scholarships, severance pay, and other financial sources

PROGRAM PROCEDURES/IMPLEMENTATON

In accordance with WIA regulations, the District has elected to place limitations on both the dollar amounts (*\$4,000*) and the duration (*52 weeks*) of training available to customers under Individual Training Accounts. The District's restriction on training funds is inclusive of tuition and non-tuition items. The District reserves the right to restrict payment of non-tuition items as determined by the District with concurrence from the District's Workforce Investment Council (WIC). Furthermore, the District and the WIC have concluded this policy meets the Workforce Investment Act's general requirement that training services shall be provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of eligible training provider(s).

A customer is **ineligible** to receive an ITA if one of the follow exists:

- a. Received an ITA within two (2) years of the date of the original ITA (successful or unsuccessful completion)
- b. Enrolled and later dropped out of the occupational training program after payment was forwarded to training provider (partial or full payment)

The District is under no obligation to fund any training outside of this established policy.

Employment Specialists endeavor to make certain that the customers receive ample information and assistance regarding training options, job prospects, and their own skill assessment:

- a. All customers must undertake a formal initial assessment, followed by a comprehensive assessment of their basic skills or occupational interest.
- b. All customers receive assessment and counseling as well as labor market information to determine whether the proposed training is both appropriate for the customer and in a demand occupation.
- c. All customers are required to research their training choices by site visits, interviewing former trainees, and course instructors.
- d. Employment Specialists and customers jointly make decisions about training.
- e. Employment Specialists act in the role of guides, facilitators, and information brokers.

Training providers and customers must be informed of and understand the District's policy prior to the following situations:

- a. Customers and training providers shall be informed of this policy during the "Referral to Training" process with completing an ITA package.
- b. Training providers shall be informed of this policy during the certification/recertification eligibility process for training providers.

Section 134(d)(4)(B) of WIA requires the coordination of training costs with funds available under other federal programs. To avoid duplicative payment of costs when an individual is eligible for both WIA and other assistance, including a Pell Grant, Sec. 663.320(b) requires that program operators and training providers coordinate by entering into arrangements with the entities administering the alternate sources of funds, including eligible providers administering Pell Grants. These entities should consider all available sources of funds, excluding loans, in determining an individual's overall need for WIA funds. The exact mix of funds should be determined based on the availability of funding for either training costs or supportive services, with the goal of ensuring that the costs of the training program the participant selects are fully paid and that necessary supportive services are available so that the training can be completed successfully. This determination should focus on the needs of the participant; simply reducing the amount of WIA funds by the amount of Pell Grant funds is not permitted. Participation in a training program funded under WIA may not be conditioned upon applying for or using a loan to help finance training costs.

- a. A customer's training request is "pending" until a signed *Expense Authorization Form* document(s) is presented within his/her ITA package.
- b. DOES shall not be responsible for any financial dispute mediation arising between the customer and the training provider regarding the customer's portion of the training cost.

ACTION: This is the District’s official policy and should be kept in your permanent policy issuance file. Share this information with your staff and anyone else who would benefit from these policies.

APPROVAL

Director’s Signature	Date
Lisa María Mallory	

Remove & Destroy:	None
Effective Date:	Date of Signature
Review Date:	Two-Year Anniversary of Signature
Distribution:	All DOES American Jobs Center Employees, Office of Program Performance Monitoring Employees
Point-of-Contact:	American Job Center, 202-698-4215