

Rockland BOCES Youth Connections Program

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Local Eligibility Policy

Under WIOA law [Section 129 (a)(1)] youth participants are required to meet specific eligibility criteria to be enrolled in a WIOA funded program. The youth are required to provide eligibility documentation including, but may not be limited to: proof of citizenship, proof of Rockland County residency, proof of social security number, proof of selective services enrollment (only pertains to male youth 18 and older), proof of employment, proof of enrollment in education, and proof of eligibility.

Out of School Youth Eligibility:

Must be between 16-24 years old and does not attend school

Must fall within ONE of these categories:

- High school dropout
- Within compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent school year quarter
- A recipient of a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is: Basic skills deficient or an English language learner
- An individual who is:
 - Subject to the justice system
 - Homeless, a runaway, or in foster care/has aged out of the system, eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act, or in out-of-home placement
 - Pregnant or parenting
 - An individual with a disability
 - Low-income and requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or hold employment (only 5% of participants)

In School Youth Eligibility:

Must be between 14-21 years old, enrolled in school, and a low income individual

Must fall within ONE of these categories:

- An individual with a disability
- Basic skills deficient
- English language learner
- Is subject to the justice system
- Homeless, a runaway, or in foster care/has aged out of the system, eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act, or in out-of-home placement
- Pregnant or parenting
- Requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or hold employment (only 5% of participants)

The income guidelines to determine eligibility for the WIOA Youth Program is the highest of:

- 70% of the lower living or 100% of poverty level for the entire family of residence

- An individual who or is a member of a family who within at least the last 6 months receives or is eligible for public assistance cash, food stamps
- Receives or is eligible for free/reduced lunch under the law
- An individual with a disability whose family of residence does not meet income requirements, but whose own incomes meets the 70% of the lower living or poverty level.

Exceptions and Limitations

There are two opportunities under WIOA law [Section 129 (a)(1)] for local Workforce Development Boards to develop policy regarding eligibility requirements.

Basic Skills Deficiency: NYSDOL accepts the definition of “basic skills deficient” provided in WIOA referring to an individual: • Who is a youth, that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or • Who is a youth or an adult, who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. *The local areas will develop a policy on the second part of the basic skills deficiency definition, in the local plans.*

A Rockland County youth will be deemed eligible under the second part of “Basic Skills Deficiency” if they are a low-income individual AND meet one of the following criteria:

- College transcript stating GPA is below 2.0 on 4.0 grading scale in math or English courses
- Enrolled in remedial course at a post-secondary school
- Enrolled in course below their assigned secondary grade level
- Scores below a 9.0 on the language portion of the TABE

WIOA Youth “Needs Additional Assistance”: **This only applies to in school youth. It does not apply to out of school youth.** These individuals come under the category of a locally defined definition of “needs additional assistance”.

A youth who “Needs Additional Assistance” may be eligible for WIOA youth services in Rockland County if they are low income and **one** of the following criteria are also met and documented:

- Substance abuse/addiction – (example of documentation: Proof of participating in a recovery program/ soon to enter a rehabilitation program/documentation of substance abuse by medical professional)
- Loss of caregiver – (Proof of death, divorce, incarceration, extended military service of primary caretaker)
- Chronic Truancy/poor school attendance (school attendance records)
- Chronic underachievement in School (school records)
- At imminent risk of homelessness (eviction notice, foreclosure notice)
- For high school graduates or drop-outs: poor work history (employment/payroll records demonstrating history of frequent job change or periods of brief employment)
- Behavioral mental health issues (letter from parent, attestation by student)