BURLINGTON COUNTY

americanjobcenter

Program Monitoring

STAFF GUIDELINES

These guidelines are made with the express purpose of aiding the advancement of Burlington County American Job Center Customer Service

Overview

Programmatic monitoring is the comprehensive review and evaluation of all contracts under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to ensure that all programs funded are in compliance with contractual agreements and consistent with employment and training goals established by the Burlington County Workforce Development Board.

The Burlington County Job Center has developed a structured monitoring process that focuses on reviewing vendors for compliance with contractual obligations as well as adherence to our established policies and procedures. In order to accomplish this, appropriate monitoring packets will be utilized for the monitoring of both the Individual Training Accounts (ITA's) and contracts obtained as a result of a Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

All monitoring is conducted by both the WIOA monitoring and accounting staff. All providers are monitored on an annual basis unless there are significant findings. All monitoring includes a pre-onsite review, and an on-site review consisting of interviews of provider staff and instructors. Interviews of Job Center customers will be conducted to ascertain if they feel they are receiving proper training and/or benefits according to the ITA and/or contract.

Generally, program operators will be informed of all monitoring visits. Program and financial monitors will devote the time necessary to observe administrative functions and procedures, training activities, time and record keeping practices, and conduct interviews with program staff and customers to ascertain the quality of the training.

BURLINGTON COUNTY AMERICAN JOB CENTER

Individual Training Account Monitoring Procedures

1. Pre-Visit Desk Review
2. Customer Interview
3. On-Site Review
4. Monitoring Report

Pre-Visit Desk Review

The Pre-Visit Desk Review is a way to gather preliminary information and identify any problems that may exist at the Eligible Training Provider site.

The Pre-Visit Desk Review includes a review of the level of service which consists of gathering information regarding the number of enrollees, number of placements, the training program, retention information, etc. The monitoring team will consist of program staff- counselors, accountants, and supervisors to ensure all Burlington County American Job Center experiences with the training provider are reflected upon. Any issues or areas of concern will be noted and special consideration will be given at the On-Site Review.

Files of customers who are attending the Training Provider will be reviewed for content to check attendance, referral and enrollment paperwork, progress notes, placement information, follow-up information/verification.

The most common areas of concern tend to be:

1. Low Placement.

    - The performance goals negotiated by the State of New Jersey and the Burlington County WDB differ between the different funding streams. The overall negotiated performance goal is around 80%. That means that if we fail to meet that performance goal, then our funding could be in jeopardy in future years.

2. Late Billing.

    - Billing is due to the Fiscal Office no later than the 5th working day of each month. Each Training Provider fills out the Time & Attendance Form, accompanied by an invoice for payment. Since customers are required to attend at least 80% for training programs that are over 600 hours and 90% for those training programs that are under 600 hours. If a student's attendance isn't at least 80% or 90%, and/or if the student has below a C average in the class, the customer's counselor issues a letter to the student reminding them of their obligation. A copy of this letter is forwarded to the Fiscal officer, the Training Provider and a copy is placed in the customer's file. No payment will be made until the time is made up, or the grade average improves. The invoice is date stamped when it is submitted as proof of the date of receipt.

3. Late Notice of Participation (NOP) Cards.

    - Each student who is approved for training is issued a NOP Card. This is the only guarantee that we have agreed to pay for the course costs, up to the $6,000 cap. In addition, the student is not officially enrolled in training until the NOP Card comes back. NOP Cards are due back no later than 3 business days after the 5th scheduled training day. Each NOP Card is date stamped when it returns, so each file will need to be pulled to check the timeliness of the submission.

4. Status Change Forms either submitted late or missing completely.

   - When a customer exits training, a Status Change Form needs to be completed by the Training Provider. Upon approval by WIOA Management, information is entered into OSOS. The Training Provider has 5 business days within the event to submit the Status Change Form, indicating an extension, dropped from training, customer placed on hold, customer changed address and/or phone number, or notifying the student completed training.

     If a student's time has been extended, a Status Change Form requesting the extension is also needed. Unemployment has the customer's last day of training entered into their system. If we are not notified that the customer is still in school, it is likely that their unemployment could be halted, causing a delay in the customer receiving payment.

5. 3, 6 & 9-Month Follow-ups aren't submitted.

   - Follow-up is a contracted responsibility of the Eligible Training Provider. Recently, we have added an area into each follow-up section for when a Training Provider cannot reach a customer. It requires the Training Provider to attempt to contact the customer at least 3 times, by at least two different methods. Method examples: telephone, mail, in person, fax, e-mail, etc. Proof of the methods attempted must accompany the Placement Form in order for the training provider's contracted obligation to be fulfilled.

     Note: If placement cannot be verified by staff of the Job Center, the placement is not counted. Therefore, it is ultimately better for the Training Provider's statistics on the consumer report card if they are able to contact the customer and verify employment.

Additional Information

- Any file that has missing information has to be pulled, indicated on the Pre-Onsite Review Form and given to management to verify and initial that the information is missing.

- Occasionally, a file that has an error will be discovered, either internally or by the Training Provider. Or a student will give information that leads to a discrepancy. This information is presented to management or discussed with the training provider, depending on the severity.

- Only pull the files that have recent activity. If they have exited training and have been employed for more than 9 months, the Training Providers obligation has been fulfilled.

Customer Interviews

There are two different customer interviews that take place: Customers who have completed training; and, customers who are currently in training.

Customers who have Completed Training

Customer interviews are completed with program customers who have completed the program via a survey that is mailed to their home address. This format aids in verifying the information we have on file for students as well as capturing their experience at the school that they attended. Contact attempts are made as soon as the status change form stating the customer has completed training and/or was placed into employment has been received from the training provider.

If there are any discrepancies found in the information, the customer file is updated with the correct information. The Training Provider is also notified of any changes.

If a customer was counted as placed by the Training Provider, but the customer has since changed employers, the Placement Report Form is completed and given to both MIS staff and the Training Provider.

As part of the Agreement with the Eligible Training Provider, "placement must be accomplished no later than 30 days after the last date of training." Keep in mind that each customer is placed "on hold" for a minimum of 45 days after the customer has completed training, giving the Training Providers a few extra weeks. During the time that a customer has exited training, but has not yet secured employment, we still capture their experiences at the Training Provider.

The information gathered by customers who have not yet become employed is very important. Some of the questions asked, such as how often they are in contact with the placement department at the school and how many interviews/job leads they have been received gives a good indication as to the school's placement efforts.

It is often times difficult to reach the customer. Multiple attempts are made; before the customer is deemed unreachable. The information gathered will go into the final report to the Training Provider. This is done in generality – no student specific names given so the student's comments remain anonymous.

Customers who are still in training

The students are the best source of information. The biggest problems encountered with a training provider are often times brought to our attention by students in attendance.

Although in person is the best way, customers can be contacted numerous ways to gather their ongoing experience at a Training Provider. This is determined based on how many students there are to interview and the time available to talk to them. It is imperative that the time the student is interviewed not take away from the purpose of them being there.

There are specific questions asked during the interview so that objectivity can be maintained. However, customers may on occasion provide additional information and experiences that need to be explored. If a customer has a serious complaint about a Training Provider, they are urged to put it in writing. Only if the complaint is in writing can action be carried out on the behalf of the student.

A synopsis of the customer's comments and experiences at the school will be included in the final report, in generalities.

On-Site Review

The monitoring team will contact the training provider to schedule an appointment for the monitoring visit.

When meeting with the administrator(s) at the Training Provider site, the monitoring team will use a standard set of review criteria. The review will include a case file review, attendance file review, facility review, and class observations. When the Pre-Onsite Review is conducted, the problems found are discussed with the Training Provider Administrator (and/or applicable member of staff).

A tour of the facilities takes place as well. Any hazards or equipment that may be out of order can be inspected and made note of. This is also a question asked of each customer, since it is not always apparent if the equipment is working or not.

Pull a sample of customer's placement effort records. This is to make sure they are complying with the record-keeping requirements stated in the agreement. There should be records on each customer, with proof of where the customer's resume has been sent, as well as any other placement efforts made on the customer's behalf.

Physical Conditions:	Fire exits, adequate restroom facilities, adequate training space, general conditions, accessible to public transportation, ADA compliant.
Equipment & Materials:	Type of equipment, quality and quantity of equipment, sufficient books and training supplies available.

Administrative Capability: Organizational Chart, number of staff, job descriptions, resumes, staff certifications.

Previous Experience: Training experience, previous monitoring findings, placement rate.

Monitoring Report

After all of the steps outlined above and the students attending school and the school's administrator have been interviewed, the final monitoring report is written. It contains a synopsis of each 'area' that was monitored. It is broken up into the following objectives:

Objective 1: Determine Institute Is Properly Documenting Student's Progress and Attendance

Objective 2: Determine Institute Is In Compliance With the Contract

Objective 3: Corrective Action Needed and/or Suggestions

- Corrective Action Needed

  Anything that is not being done in accordance with the Agreement is indicated here. These are areas that require a response from the training provider on how the problem will be avoided in the future. The due date for the corrective actions is specified in the cover letter that accompanies the Monitoring Report.

- Suggestions

  If there is anything that students suggested, but is not a conflict with the Agreement, it is placed here. For example, if students say the course is too condensed, it would be indicated that the course should be reviewed to possibly extend the hours for the course.

A copy of the monitoring report is contained in the Forms Section of this document.

Monitoring reports will be generated after each monitoring visit. The monitoring team must complete and submit reports no later than 2 business days after the site visit. Reports should highlight the review findings and provide essential information needed to determine contract compliance and the quality of the service being provided. Information should be presented in a clear concise manner.

Each monitored site will receive feedback from the monitoring visit via letter with a copy of the monitoring findings. The letter will indicate whether or not there are deficiencies. Where there are deficiencies, the monitoring findings will be detailed and a request for corrective action/recommendations will be attached.

Corrective Action procedures should be implemented to correct any and all program deficiencies found as a result of the monitoring effort. If the program deficiencies are deemed to be gross, non-compliance, possible fraud, employee and/or customer misconduct, or any other possible criminal activities – the monitoring team must report these findings to management immediately.

A follow-up monitoring visit will be conducted with all sites that require corrective action.

Key Principles of Quality Customer Service

Our number one goal is providing all customers with the very best service as possible. It is important that the Job Center Customer Service staff adhere to the following key principles of quality customer service:

- Make people feel welcome – customers need to feel that they are welcome from the moment that they walk in the front door. Avoid creating the impression – through inattention, facial expressions, and other verbal or non-verbal means – that the customer's arrival means an added burden to you.

- Create an atmosphere in which people are comfortable asking for assistance – as the frontline staff person of our Job Center you should do everything in your power to break down any reluctance that a customer may have to ask for the help that they need to obtain employment services.

- Do not automatically steer people to "targeted populations" services – while programs for specific populations are helpful resources, these should not be the only options for our customers. All customers are entitled to the same full range of services.

- Speak to customers directly – be sure to speak directly to the individual who is seeking services even if they are accompanied by another person (such as a family member or personal assistant).

- Become familiar with local resources for different populations and develop relationships with the offices that are providing these services – customers come to the Human Services Facility for many different reasons. You can assist Job Center customers by not only directing them to the Job Center but by leaning what additional resources are available in the building/community and how customers can use these resources to help meet their support needs.

- If you don’t know, Ask – If you are not sure about a particular service or how to answer a question from a customer, reach out to another resource to get clarity for both you and the individual you are assisting.

- Be friendly, courteous, and respectful – Put yourself in the customer’s shoes. Any one of us can find ourselves in the position of the people we serve.

BURLINGTON COUNTY AMERICAN JOB CENTER

Forms

1. Training Provider Monitoring Packet
2. Youth Provider Monitoring Packet
3. Work First NJ Monitoring Packet