

Work Experience Program

WORKSITE SUPERVISOR HANDBOOK



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity



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Dear Worksite Supervisor:

We are excited to partner with you to provide a meaningful work experience for the trainee(s) who participate in the program.

Work experience provides work-based training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The goal of the work experience is to encourage WIOA Trainees to remain in school, develop career goals, and secure employment. Through this activity, Trainees will have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to meet their present and future employment needs.

As a Worksite Supervisor, you are in an exceptional position to provide guidance and training for WIOA Trainees in the community. Therefore, we hope this will be a meaningful experience for you as well. Your participation will enable them to develop positive work habits and attitudes toward work while enhancing their job-readiness and transferable skills.

This handbook was prepared as a general guide to help you understand the working relationships among all parties involved (Worksite, Worksite Supervisor, Trainee, and LWIA/Contractor). It also provides general information on the processes and forms used in the program's operation. Also enclosed is valuable information to answer many of your questions.

Thank you for opening your company to provide work experience, opportunities, and guidance to these trainee members of the community.

We appreciate your engagement!

INTRODUCTION

We are especially pleased to welcome back those of you who served as a Worksite Supervisor in previous years and to meet and greet those of you who are working with us for the first time. We appreciate your willingness to participate and give the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Trainees an opportunity to gain valuable work experience.

The worksite must provide supervision and training to the Trainee as outlined in this handbook. For WIOA Youth Trainees, Worksite Supervisors are encouraged to identify a Worksite Mentor for the Trainee to meet with on a structured basis to address questions or concerns. The Worksite Mentor should be comfortable offering guidance, support, and encouragement to help develop the Trainee's competence and character. Ideally, this relationship will develop into adult mentoring lasting one year or longer. Labor standards apply to any work experience involving an employee-employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and applicable State law, including, but not limited to, the Illinois Paid Leave of All Workers Act.

Worksite Supervisors assist Trainees in meeting their professional goals by establishing a positive work environment indicative of learning. Supervisors are in a unique position to provide the Trainee with opportunities for continued growth and development through hands-on training that can lead to future success. The Trainees will learn many valuable skills on how to become dependable and productive employees.

This handbook addresses work experience policies and procedures, and expectations for Worksite Supervisors. Additionally, it contains some valuable tips on supervision.

For the purposes of this handbook, WIOA work experience Trainees will be referred to as the **"Trainee"**.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

Work Experience Design

Work experience is designed to provide Trainees with an opportunity to be exposed to the world of work, engage in career exploration, improve future employability, emphasize the importance of education, participate in life skills training, and provide hands-on work experience.

The Trainee will benefit from the experience as they:

1. Gain exposure to Paid and Unpaid work experience opportunities;
2. Gain meaningful work experience;
3. Learn and develop the skills, attitudes, and commitment necessary to succeed in the world of work;
4. Gain exposure to various career pathways; and
5. Interact with working professionals in a positive work environment.

Goals and Objectives of Work Experience

1. The Worksite Supervisor will provide a suitable Worksite for the Trainee to gain valuable work readiness skills to improve their occupational potential.
 - a. Work experience is a structured and well-supervised "work-based" training. Trainees gain employability skills, such as working and completing assignments as directed, showing up for work regularly and on time, maintaining a positive attitude, working as a member of a team, demonstrating sound reasoning abilities, and exercising independent judgment.

- b. Work experience reinforces the direct connection between the skills acquired in the classroom and in the world of work. Thus, motivating the Trainee to stay in school and continue toward post-secondary education.
 - c. Work experience encourages the Trainee to explore various occupations and to identify career pathways based on their individual abilities, interests, and aptitudes.
 - d. Work experience enables the Trainee to develop and maintain good employee/Supervisor relationships.
 - e. Work experience is not to be considered as regular employment by your company in the same way as other employees are viewed. Rather, it is a chance for the Trainee to “experience” the world of work and gain useful insights into the requirements employers have for regular employees.
 - f. Work experience should be a valuable learning tool for the Trainee.
2. The Worksite Supervisor is an integral link in helping the Trainee to establish solid work behavior skills, as you will:
- a. Become a mentor, career guidance counselor, and role model to the Trainee.
 - b. Motivate the Trainee to pursue post-secondary education.
 - c. Provide direction for the Trainee to move closer to attaining the skills they will need to become a valuable and productive employee.
 - d. Emphasize to the Trainee the importance of setting goals and executing them.
 - e. Provide guidance for the Trainee to learn to make the best use of the employer's resources, take responsibility for work performed, grow in their perceptions of the types of jobs they are suited for, and the skills required to do those jobs satisfactorily.

Length of Work Experience

A Work Experience is not intended for long-term skill building within the occupation but rather as an entry step for the Trainee to experience the occupation, develop their skills, and gain work history and references. A Work Experience must be for a limited period. In determining an appropriate length of time, consideration should be given to the skill requirement of the position, the Trainee's academic and occupational skills level, prior work experience, the Trainee's Employment Plan, and the Job Service budget.

WORKSITE APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK EXPERIENCE

Before agreeing to take responsibility as a Worksite, they Supervisors should consider whether their organization offers what the Trainee really needs, such as:

- 1. Providing experiences that enable the Trainee to achieve their goal of gaining work experience.
- 2. Holding the Trainee to the same high standards that would be expected from other employees, such as acceptable work behaviors.
- 3. Developing skills of the Trainee that are tied to the types of occupational interests the Trainee possesses.
- 4. Exposing the Trainee to materials, processes, tools, and technology that are congruent with those used by the Worksite and other agencies/industries/businesses.

5. Ensuring that the Trainee is engaged in work experiences that enable the Trainee to attain useful and transferable skills.

WORK EXPERIENCE CONTRACT

Work Experience Contract

A written contract outlining the responsibilities and monitoring requirements must be developed between the employer/worksites and the provider of career services, called the Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA)/Contractor, using the Work Experience Contract attachment of the [Work Experience policy](#).

The contract must include, at a minimum: the worksite information, work experience requirements, employer responsibilities and assurances, and other terms and conditions of the work experience, such as consequences for nonadherence to the agreement and a termination clause.

The worksite or host site entity and the LWIA/Contractor must sign the contract and receive a copy. The contract must be available for audit and monitoring purposes.

WORK EXPERIENCE OUTLINE/PLAN

Work Experience Outline/Plan

A written outline/plan detailing the parameters of the work experience, internship, or transitional job must be developed between the employer/worksites, the LWIA/Contractor, the Career Planner, and the Trainee using the Work Experience Outline attachment of the [Work Experience policy](#).

The outline must include, at a minimum: the type of work experience, the location where the training will take place, the duration (beginning and end dates), compensation, goals/skills, supplies needed for the work experience, and supervision.

The employer of record, the Trainee, the LWIA/Contractor, and the work experience provider (if different from the employer) must all sign and receive a copy of the outline. The outline must be available for audit and monitoring purposes.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND FEDERAL STATUTES

Equal Opportunity Policy

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information.



Most employers with at least 15 employees are covered by EEOC laws (20 employees in age discrimination cases). Most labor unions and employment agencies are also covered.

The laws apply to all types of work situations, including hiring, firing, promotions, harassment, training, wages, and benefits. Learn more about the [laws enforced by EEOC](#).

Nepotism

No Trainee may be placed in a WIOA work experience activity if a member of that person's immediate family is directly supervised by or directly supervises that individual. To the extent that an applicable State or local legal requirement regarding nepotism is more restrictive than this provision, such State or local requirement must be followed.

Unionization

A trainee may not engage in, solicit, or discourage activities related to unions.

Sectarian Activities

WIOA Title I funds may not be spent on employment or training in sectarian activities. The Trainee must not be employed under Title I of WIOA to carry out the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of any facility that is used or to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship. However, WIOA funds may be used for the maintenance of a facility that is not primarily or inherently devoted to sectarian instruction or religious worship if the organization operating the facility is part of a program or activity providing services to WIOA Trainees [WIOA sec. 188 (a)(3)].

Maintenance of Effort

The Worksite agrees not to terminate, lay off, or in any way reduce the working hours or infringe upon the promotions or advancement opportunities of any current employee through utilization or in anticipation of utilization of any Trainee at this Worksite.

Hatch Act

The Trainee may not engage in, solicit, or discourage political activity while in training at the Worksite. No funds provided by the program may be used for any project involving political activity.

In addition to the above federal regulations and guidelines, WIOA regulations have restrictions on acceptable program activities and supervisory practice. Therefore, Illegal activities are prohibited or restricted. To ensure the integrity of work experience, the Worksite Supervisor may not solicit or accept kickbacks, favors, or anything of monetary value from the Trainee or LWIA/Contractor.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WORK EXPERIENCE TEAM

It is the responsibility of the following team to ensure a positive work experience for the Worksite and the Trainee.

LWIA/Contractor Staff Responsibilities

1. To be the primary point of contact for the employer/Worksite Supervisor.
2. Provide orientation with the Worksite Supervisor and ensure that all required documents are completed and signed (original documents must be kept at the Worksite and copies kept at the LWIA/Contractor organization location).
3. Provide orientation to the Trainee prior to placement at the Worksite. This orientation enables the Trainee to understand the purpose and expectations of the work experience.
4. Advocate for the Trainee with any issues and concerns that they are experiencing.
5. Provide support and guidance to the Worksite Supervisor with any issues and concerns that may arise or

that the Trainee is experiencing.

6. Monitor the Worksite to ensure that the Trainee is receiving quality work experience that will transfer into marketable skills. Also, to ensure that the Worksite Supervisor is receiving adequate assistance and resources.
7. Review timesheets to ensure that they are completed in their entirety, and that all appropriate signatures are in place.

Worksite Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Provide orientation on the Worksite policies and procedures to the Trainee. This orientation enables the Trainee to know and understand what is expected by the Worksite Supervisor.

Also, the orientation should include:

- Worksite rules and policies, including dress code.
 - Identification of the assigned Worksite Supervisor, alternate Supervisor(s), and regular employees of the Worksite with whom the Trainee will be working.
 - Worksite starting and ending times, including times for breaks and lunch periods, and designated places to take breaks and eat lunch.
 - Designated place for the Trainee to park their vehicle, if applicable.
 - A secure place at the Worksite where the Trainee can store their personal belongings.
 - Telephone numbers to call when the Trainee is late or absent from work.
 - Procedures to follow if the Trainee experiences a problem they cannot resolve with the Supervisor, and/or regular employees.
 - Child labor laws, safety rules, and accident/emergency medical treatment procedures.
 - Assignments, responsibilities, and tasks to be performed as a function of the work experience.
 - Work experience performance evaluation to be conducted by the Worksite Supervisor to ensure the Trainee exhibits proper work ethics.
 - Activities and actions which are not allowed while performing the work experience, including activities which are political and/or religious, and the use of alcohol and drugs.
2. Ensure that the Trainee receives a positive, meaningful work experience and is always supervised. Work Experience should be planned in such a way that the Trainee feels ownership of their training and can personally identify areas for personal growth.
 3. Communicate all issues or concerns to the LWIA/Contractor to ensure that they are addressed.
 4. Ensure that the Trainee time sheet and work performance evaluation are completed, signed, and dated by the Trainee, Worksite Supervisor, and submitted to the LWIA/Contractor for processing.
 5. Create an environment where the Trainee feels comfortable asking questions about their duties and responsibilities. Also, encourage questions that provide guidance to the Trainee on various career pathways.

6. Provide positive feedback when the Trainee demonstrates satisfactory performance and appropriate work ethics. Also, give constructive guidance when the Trainee demonstrates unsatisfactory performance and inappropriate work ethics.
7. Evaluate the Trainee on a regular basis to ensure they understand the assignments and are performing in a satisfactory manner.

CHILD LABOR LAWS

All Trainees under 16 years of age must have a current and valid Employment Certificate (Work Permit). **Do not, under any circumstances,** allow a Trainee to commence work activities until a certificate has been provided by the Trainee or LWIA/Contractor. If the Trainee comes to work without their Employment Certificate (Work Permit), the Worksite Supervisor must refer the Trainee back to the LWIA/Contractor.

- NOTE: Minors 14 & 15 years of age who have been issued a permanent identification card (Form DOL-4102) should retain the card themselves. The original employment certificate should be provided to the Worksite. On subsequent employment, the minor should present the ID card to the employer. The Worksite should make a copy of the ID card for the minor's personnel file and return the original to the minor.

All Worksites must comply with the applicable [Child Labor Laws](#).

PAYROLL PROCEDURES

Work Schedule

The Worksite Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the Trainee adheres to the work schedule. It is important that the trainee signs in at the start of the shift and signs out at the end of the shift daily to indicate the actual hours worked. The Trainee must also sign in and out for lunch breaks. This is to ensure time-record accountability for the Trainee and the Worksite Supervisor. **Trainee will not be paid for overtime, holidays, or lunch.** Therefore, it is vital that the Trainee and Worksite Supervisor adhere to the work schedule indicated in the Worksite Agreement.

The Worksite Supervisor is solely responsible for verifying time and attendance records. If there are any issues with the time worked, be sure to report them to the LWIA/Contractor immediately so you both can correct them.



WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRESS REPORT AND INVOICE

Work Experience Progress Report and Invoice

The Worksite Supervisor must evaluate the Trainee's work performance.

The purpose of the performance evaluation is to:

- Help the Trainee build on their strengths and identify the areas that they need improvement to be more efficient.
- Enable the creation of reasonable performance standards; therefore, the Supervisor and Trainee are aware of what is considered acceptable performance.
- Provide an opportunity for open dialogue between the Worksite Supervisor and Trainee to mutually establish goals for development.

The written progress report, including invoicing if applicable, must be submitted by the worksite in the manner designed by the LWIA/Contractor, using the Work Experience Progress Report and Invoice attachment of the [Work Experience policy](#).

The progress report must include, at a minimum, an evaluation of the Trainee, including progress towards the goals/skills outlined, and the hours worked.

The work site supervisor, the Trainee, the LWIA/Contractor, and the work experience provider (if different from the employer) must all sign and receive a copy of the outline. The progress report must be available for audit and monitoring purposes.

RECORD KEEPING

The Worksite must maintain accurate and organized records for the Trainee. The Worksite monitoring visit will include a review of the Trainee's file to ensure it includes, at a minimum, the following documents.



- Employment Certificate (Work Permit) – if applicable.
- Payroll records (Timesheets signed by the Trainee and Worksite Supervisor).

- Medical/Emergency Information Form for the Trainee.
- Signed Work Experience Contract.
- Signed Work Experience Outline/Plan.
- Signed Work Experience Progress Report and Invoice
- Copies of completed accident reports – if applicable.
- Copy of counseling sessions and disciplinary actions – if applicable.
- Copy of documentation of events leading up to and including termination that have been reviewed with the LWIA/Contractor – if applicable.

WORKSITE AND WORK EXPERIENCE MONITORING

Monitoring will be conducted to ensure compliance with relevant regulations (e.g., prohibitions on the use of sectarian Worksites, time sheet monitoring, and adherence to child labor laws). These visits are also to ensure that Trainees are well-supervised, that the Worksite Supervisor provides meaningful work activities, the site is safe, and the Trainee is participating in the work activities satisfactorily. The [Work Experience policy](#) further outlines the monitoring process.

GENERAL SAFETY RULES

Worksite Supervisors are to review these rules with the Trainee.

- Report any injury to the Worksite Supervisor and the LWIA/Contractor immediately.
- Report all unsafe working conditions to the Worksite Supervisor and LWIA/Contractor.
- Horseplay is always prohibited.
- Drinking alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited during working hours. If discovered under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the Trainee will not be permitted to work.
- If the Trainee does not currently have First Aid training, they are not to move or treat an injured person unless there is immediate danger, such as profuse bleeding or stoppage of breathing.
- Appropriate clothing and footwear must always be worn.
- Do not perform any task unless trained to do so and maintain awareness of the hazards associated with that task. Trainee must not perform any task other than what is outlined in the Work Experience Outline/Plan.
- May be assigned certain personal protective safety equipment. This equipment should be available for use, be maintained in good condition, and be worn when required. If applicable, an approved hard hat must be worn in areas where there is danger of objects falling.
- Learn safe work practices. When in doubt about performing a task safely, the Trainee must contact the Worksite Supervisor for instruction or training.

- Should not use any equipment for purposes other than its intended use.
- Never remove or bypass safety equipment.
- Should not approach operating or safety equipment from the blind side.
- Learn where fire extinguishers and first aid kits are located.
- Always maintain a general condition of good housekeeping in all work areas.
- Should be alerted to hazards that could affect the Worksite.
- Obey safety signs and tags.
- Should always perform their assigned task in a safe and proper manner and not take shortcuts (taking shortcuts and ignoring established safety rules is the leading cause of employee injury).

WORKSITE PROHIBITED ITEMS

- The Worksite should not allow the Trainee to be transported in a privately owned vehicle during work hours.
- The Worksite should not allow the Trainee, regardless of age, to drive a company-owned motor vehicle during working hours.
- The Worksite should not leave the Trainee unattended at the Worksite – if the assigned Worksite Supervisor must leave the Worksite, a qualified alternate Supervisor must be placed in charge.
- The Worksite should not allow the Trainee to travel outside of the Worksite without prior approval from the LWIA/Contractor, and the request must be in writing.
- The Worksite should not allow the Trainee to work for any casino or other gambling establishment, aquarium, zoo, golf course, or swimming pool. Never allow the Trainee to go swimming anywhere during working hours (the Trainee could be placed with an organization such as a city park or a YMCA that happens to have a swimming pool or a golf course, but their work experience should not involve pool- or golf-course-related activities).

DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS ACTION PROCEDURES

The following are guidelines that the Worksite Supervisor must follow to address the discipline and/or performance problems that the Trainee is exhibiting.

1. The first step is to warn the Trainee verbally.
2. If the problem continues, the second step is to conduct a counseling session led by the Worksite Supervisor and LWIA/Contractor. The counseling session must be documented and placed in the Trainee's file.
3. If an acceptable resolution for the problem is not reached and it continues, the third step is to terminate the Trainee from the Worksite.

Each disciplinary action must be documented, dated, and signed by the Worksite Supervisor, the Trainee, and the LWIA/Contractor. A copy of the disciplinary action must be placed in the Trainee's file.

Note: The previous steps depend on the severity of the problems the Trainee undertook. Therefore, the process may vary depending on the circumstances.

WORK EXPERIENCE TERMINATION POLICIES

The Trainee should be treated like regular employees who are expected to conform to all personnel procedures of the work site.

It may become necessary to terminate a Trainee from the Worksite and/or work experience for the following reasons:

- Insubordination, including the use of foul or profane language and/or disrespect.
- Inefficiency and inability to perform duties/assignments (unwillingness to learn).
- Intoxication and/or possession of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Willful violation of any Worksite rules.
- Absence from work without notifying the Worksite Supervisor or LWIA/Contractor (no call, no show).
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.

Before termination takes effect, the Worksite Supervisor must discuss it with the LWIA/Contractor. Any charges made and any actions taken must be documented in the Trainee's file. In the event a Trainee must be terminated, the Worksite Supervisor should adequately document the events leading up to and including the termination. This documentation must be reviewed with the LWIA/Contractor immediately. The LWIA/Contractor will then determine whether to terminate the Trainee from the overall work experience based on the severity of the charges.

GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

An administrative staff person has been designated as the EEO Officer responsible for handling complaints lodged against the WIOA Program. The Trainee must have the Grievance/Complaint Procedures explained to them. If the Trainee feels that they have been dealt with unfairly or discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation, that Trainee may file a grievance. The problem must first be discussed with the Worksite Supervisor and/or LWIA/Contractor. If the problem is not resolved, the Trainee must put the problem in writing and forward it to the State Equal Opportunity Officer and Investigator, as instructed in the [Complaint and Grievance Procedures](#) policy.

EFFECTIVE SUPERVISING

Worksite supervisors assist Trainees in meeting their professional goals by establishing a positive work environment indicative of learning. Supervisors are in a unique position to provide the Trainee with opportunities for continued growth and development through hands-on training that can lead to future success. The Trainee will learn many valuable skills on how to become a dependable and productive employee.

Here are a few steps to assist in supervising the Trainee at a Worksite.

- Address the business's purposes and objectives to the Trainees so they understand how company employees contribute to the business's overall success.
- Determine what needs to be done to achieve those purposes and objectives; therefore, provide the Trainee with a clear description of what they will be learning.
- Worksite Supervisor and company employees should consistently set a good example to the Trainee; remember, "Actions speak much louder than words."
- Explain goals, expectations, policies, procedures, norms, and preferences clearly and thoroughly.
- Always communicate effectively and positively using verbal, nonverbal, and written communication. Keep the communication line open.
- Provide a work environment that is safe (security, stability, order/structure, etc.)
- Provide adequate resources needed for the successful completion of their training.
- Always provide opportunities for continued growth and development of the Trainee.
- Use the DEEP approach (Demonstrate, Explain, Experience, and Process) to get positive work performance from the Trainee.
- Always engage and motivate the Trainee.
- Provide continuous evaluation to reinforce positive work performance. Evaluation should be objective and ongoing.
- Be open to suggestions from the Trainee as well.
- Lastly, supervise the Trainee effectively so that their experience at your Worksite will leave a lasting impression.

MAKING LEARNING RICH

Remember that the Trainee is a TRAINEE! This may be their first experience working for someone other than a parent, relative, neighbor, etc. The Trainee may not fully understand the extent of their obligations and responsibilities pertaining to a Worksite training situation.



You should take steps to ensure:

- Tasks to be performed by the Trainee are identified up front, and enough time is allowed to ensure the Trainee can complete the tasks during the program duration.
- Trainee's strengths are identified and exercised to the benefit of the Supervisor and the Trainee.
- Tasks are self-directed. The trainee and Supervisor agree on goals and plan a strategy to meet those goals. The supervisor coaches the Trainee through this process.
- Trainees are integrated into the organization, but is not constrained by allegiances, preconceptions, and commitments to the status quo. A trainee is allowed to share his/her perspective with regular employees and to be an agent of change.
- There is a clear link between goals, competencies, and tasks. The trainee has multiple opportunities to practice and develop transferable skills.
- Trainee provides valuable products and services that would not otherwise be available.
- Trainees feel valued as part of the organization and take pride in the work and what is being done.
- Encourage the Trainee to develop a portfolio by providing evidence of work skills. This often includes reference letters from their Worksite Supervisors, a resume, and a cover letter.