

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Recovery Act Funding

The Recovery Act provides a supplement to the 2008 formula funding that Minnesota received through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). WIA specifies that funds for employment and training activities be distributed to local Workforce Service Areas (WSAs) for the delivery of youth services.

The Recovery Act is intended to preserve and create jobs, promote the nation's economic recovery, and assist those most impacted by the recession. The Recovery Act provides an opportunity for each of Minnesota's sixteen Workforce Service Areas (WSAs) to help disconnected youth in their service area reconnect through multiple pathways to education and training opportunities necessary to enter and advance in the workforce.

The attached map shows Minnesota's WSAs and the amount of Recovery Act funding available for youth services. A second attachment provides a list of the primary local contact for each county in Minnesota and the cities of Minneapolis and Duluth for youth employment opportunities created through the Recovery Act funds.

Eligibility: Youth who are eligible for services under the Recovery Act include those who are:

- not less than age 14 and not more than age 24
- a low-income individual, and
- an individual who is one or more of the following:
 - Deficient in basic literacy skills
 - School Dropout
 - Homeless, runaway or foster child
 - Pregnant or teen parent
 - Offender
 - An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment

The eligible age range for services under the regular Workforce Investment Act is 14-21; for the Recovery Act funds the range has been increased to 14-24.

Youth with a documented disability (including learning disability) can be classified as a "family of one", meaning that only their own income, rather than their family income, will be considered in determining whether they meet the low-income definition.

Services: Summer youth employment opportunities are heavily emphasized with the Recovery Act funds, but some year-round youth activities are also possible.

Performance Accountability: The work readiness performance indicator under WIA will be the only measure of performance to assess the effectiveness of summer employment for youth under the Recovery Act. The Department of Labor has defined

attainment of work readiness skills to include a measurable increase in world-of-work awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, values clarification and personal understanding, career planning and decision making, and job search techniques (resumes, interviews, applications, and follow-up letters). They also encompass survival/daily living skills such as using the phone, telling time, shopping, renting an apartment, opening a bank account, and using public transportation. They also include positive work habits, attitudes, and behaviors such as punctuality, regular attendance, presenting a neat appearance, getting along and working well with others, exhibiting good conduct, following instructions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability, and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job. This category also entails developing motivation and adaptability, obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills, and acquiring an improved self-image.

For more information: For more information about 2009 summer youth employment opportunities and application details for a particular county, contact the key local contact identified on the attached list of summer youth employment contacts.

For information about Minnesota's implementation of the WIA Youth Recovery Act, visit www.positivelyminnesota.com/youth.

For general information about the implementation of the Recovery Act, visit www.recovery.gov or www.dol.gov/recovery (U.S. Department of Labor's Recovery Act website).