
EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE

1600 E. Belle Terrace
Bakersfield, CA 93307

POLICY BULLETIN: ETR #26e-25

TO: All ETR and Adult Work Experience Providers
FROM: ^{BE} Brandon Evans, Chief Workforce Development Officer
DATE: February 10, 2026
SUBJECT: Work Experience Policy, Excluding Youth*

**Youth see Policy Bulletin 23a-25*

This Policy Bulletin Supersedes Any Previously Issued Policy Statements Concerning Non-Youth Funded Work Experience Policies and Procedures and All Changes Have Been Indicated in Bold Italic Type.

PURPOSE

This policy applies to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) formula allocated funds including Adult and Dislocated Worker (DW) funds **as well as special grant funds administered by Employers' Training Resource (ETR)**. See Policy Bulletin **ETR #23a-25** for formula Youth funded work experience requirements. Contracts funded with non-formula allocated funds may be subject to other criteria from the grantor. Work experience limits, when funded with Adult or DW funds for participants who are co-enrolled into non-formula grants, may be waived at the discretion of the Chief Workforce Development Officer of ETR in order to leverage funding or to meet the grant requirements.

All WIOA service providers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is distributed to, understood and followed by appropriate agency staff.

WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

The Work Experience Program is intended to provide structured learning and paid work experience opportunities for eligible participants. The work experience sites are with public, private, or non-profit employers and align with clients' skills. Paid work experience gives the participants the opportunity to attain skills and develop appropriate work habits that will enable them to secure and retain unsubsidized employment and become self-sufficient.

WAGE RATE

Effective July 1, 2018, the WIOA work experience wage for non-Youth served with WIOA formula funds provided by ETR became the same as the State's minimum wage. Contracts issued to providers of Adult/DW work experience will cite that wages will be at the same rate as the State minimum wage for all clients. Since 2024, California minimum wage has varied based on the job title, industry, type of employer, etc. It is the agency's responsibility to maintain proper documentation to support the minimum wage rate used.

MAXIMUM HOURS

Due to changes in California's minimum wage, an earnings cap of \$6,000 per participant will be imposed. For WIOA funded work experience, the cap will take effect July 1, 2026. It is the agency's responsibility to determine the appropriate number of hours per participant in accordance with California's varying minimum wage rules, as well as track participant hours, to ensure that the **\$6,000** cap is not exceeded. If a participant obtains employment while enrolled in a work experience activity, they may leave the activity before completing the maximum hours to assume their new position, as obtaining and retaining unsubsidized employment is the goal of the program. Work experience is limited to one term per participant.

EXCEPTION

In certain circumstances and at the discretion of ETR's Chief Workforce Development Officer or Assistant Director, the minimum wage pay requirement ***and/or the participant earnings cap*** may be waived to another amount deemed appropriate, ***depending on the source and availability of funding***. Justification for this waiver ***must*** be in writing. ETR's Client Services Division shall ensure that appropriate documentation is on file demonstrating the client's need for a paid work experience activity. ***Under no circumstances may a special grant funded work experience term extend beyond the grant's period of performance.***

CALIFORNIA PAID SICK LEAVE LAW

All providers must comply with California Labor Law regarding paid sick leave for paid work experience participants. Refer to the Employment Development Department Workforce Services Directive WSD15-26 regarding Subsidized Employment and Employee Benefits at http://www.edd.ca.gov/jobs_and_training/pubs/wsd15-26.pdf Providers will be monitored for compliance and may be subject to corrective action or non-payment until in compliance.

MANDATORY SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING

All providers will comply with the State of California Senate Bill 1343 regarding sexual harassment in the workplace. All providers shall provide sexual harassment training to all seasonal and temporary employees, i.e., WIOA or other grant-funded participants.

The training must meet or exceed the minimum requirements of State law and be completed within 100 hours of employment or thirty (30) calendar days, whichever occurs first. All providers must retain written documentation of participants' acknowledgement of receipt of the training.

INQUIRIES

Please direct comments or questions regarding this policy to your assigned Departmental Analyst.