

LOCAL DEFINITION FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD AND FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Effective

July 1, 2025

Purpose

This policy establishes the standards and procedures for determining economic self-sufficiency and family self-sufficiency within the Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Area, in alignment with WIOA and applicable state guidance.

Applies To

1. Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board (STWDB)
2. Workforce Initiative Association (WIA)
3. All Area Subrecipients

References

1. [ODJFS WIOAPL 15-09.1](#) Training Services for Adults & Dislocated Workers
2. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
3. [ODJFS WIOAPL 15-06](#) Determination of Dependent Status
4. [United For ALICE – Ohio County Reports](#)
5. Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Area Program Policy: Individual Training Accounts

Related Documents

Not applicable

Background

Due to Levels of self-sufficiency varying throughout local areas, ODJFS requires local areas to define self-sufficiency and family self-sufficiency. This flexibility allows local areas to tailor their services in a way that works in their local economy. This locally defined self-sufficiency standard and income threshold must be utilized and applied when determining eligibility for adults and Out of School Youth (to co-enroll in WIOA Adult, if necessary) seeking training funds through funding requests.

Definitions

- ***Self-Sufficiency:*** An economic standard that specifies the income needs of families, by family size, the number and ages of children in the family, and local area geographical considerations.
- ***Family Self-Sufficiency:*** A combined family income standard used to determine eligibility for adult-funded ITAs.
- ***Family:*** Per 20 C.F.R. 675.300, two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or decree of court, who are living in a single residence and are included in one or more of the following categories: 1) A married couple and dependent children. 2) A parent or guardian and dependent children. 3) A married couple.
- ***Interim Employment:*** Employment that has been accepted for income maintenance prior to, and/or during, participation in career or training services with the intention of ending such employment at the completion of the career or training services and entry into permanent, unsubsidized employment as a

result of the services. Interim employment is accepted because the affected workers have lost the primary occupation for which their training, experience, or work history qualifies them. Interim employment can be part-time or full-time and must not be with the same employer from which the affected workers were dislocated.

Policy & Procedure

Local Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard: The Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board adopts 225-300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) as the local economic self-sufficiency standard for adults and dislocated workers. This threshold reflects current local economic conditions and recognizes that households earning below this level often remain financially vulnerable and unable to consistently meet basic needs while participating in training. The Board periodically reviews this standard to ensure continued alignment with regional cost-of-living data and workforce participation realities.

Family Self-Sufficiency Standard (Adult-Funded ITAs Only): For adult-funded Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), eligibility is limited to participants whose combined family income is below the locally defined family self-sufficiency standard.

For any adult 18–24 seeking an adult-funded ITA, staff must determine dependency status per WIOAPL 15-06 (as referenced in WIOAPL 15-09.1). If dependent, parental income will be included in the family self-sufficiency calculation. Area 6 adopts the ALICE calculation at 300% FPL in Stark and Tuscarawas Counties.

Area 6 adopts the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) methodology as the basis for determining family self-sufficiency and establishes the threshold at 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for both Stark and Tuscarawas Counties.

This standard is informed by ALICE county-level Household Survival Budgets, which measure the minimum income required to afford basic necessities—including housing, food, child care, transportation, health care, technology, and taxes—without reliance on public assistance. Analysis of ALICE data demonstrates that households earning below approximately 300% FPL in Stark and Tuscarawas Counties remain economically unstable, even when employed, and lack the financial capacity to self-fund training or absorb training-related costs.

The use of a 300% FPL ALICE-aligned threshold more accurately reflects local cost-of-living conditions than the federal poverty measure alone, supports participants who are stable enough to successfully complete training, and prevents premature exclusion of working households who remain financially vulnerable.

Determination Procedures: Staff must document determinations supporting need for training, income comparisons, dependency status for ages 18–24, and interim employment analysis for employed dislocated workers.

Extenuating Circumstances: When family income is greater than family self-sufficiency, Area 6 may approve an adult-funded ITA only if documented extenuating circumstances cause economic hardship for the duration of the ITA. Allowable hardships include, but are not limited to:

- Ongoing, medically essential costs not covered by insurance;
- Health insurance premiums not paid by other sources;
- Past-due mortgage/rent/essential utilities caused by involuntary unemployment/underemployment;
- Court-ordered child/spousal support;
- Ongoing elder-care/home-health/assisted-living payments;

- Debt from disaster, severe illness, or disability.

Excluded: normal rent/mortgage, car payments, fuel, groceries, credit cards, payday loans. Approvals required by STWDB Executive Director or designee. Signed documentation must be retained in the case file.

Documentation & Monitoring: All determinations and approvals must be documented in the participant case file and in AIREs. Compliance will be reviewed through local and state monitoring processes.

Responsible Party

Executive Director, Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board

Approving Authority

Board of Trustees, Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board

Revision History

07-01-2016 | 07-01-2025