

Memorandums of Understanding for the One-Stop Delivery System

Strategies for strengthening coordination among partners to improve access and outcomes for job seekers with disabilities

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates memorandums of understanding (MOUs) between local workforce development boards (WDBs) and required partners that make up the one-stop delivery system. Effective MOUs outline partners' roles, service coordination, and resource coordination to provide a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the partner programs' services and improves outcomes for job seekers, including individuals with disabilities.

Why it matters

MOUs ensure that all partners align their goals with WIOA and coordinate with one another. MOUs can foster collaboration, prevent misunderstandings, and even create broader access to services or provide a seamless experience for job seekers. When partners develop a collaborative and engaging MOU, they can support staff and create efficiencies across programs and partners.

Best practices

Well-developed MOUs, when effectively communicated, help staff across partner organizations understand shared commitments and collaborate to support service delivery and customer outcomes.

The intent of the MOU is to:

- Clearly define how partners will interact within the one-stop system to coordinate responsibilities, share resources, and provide seamless service delivery to customers.
- Include a summary section that briefly describes each partner's contributions and sets expectations up front.
- Stay current by requiring all participating partners to review the MOU annually and modify it as needed.

Key stakeholders and audience

Many people should be informed about the existence and content of MOUs, including the required one-stop partners listed in [34 CFR §361.400](#) and these central WIOA entities:

- State and local workforce development boards
- American Job Center (AJC) operators and staff
- Vocational rehabilitation managers and staff
- Adult education/career pathways managers and staff

Other key collaborators may include managers and staff of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) programs, developmental disabilities and mental health agencies, and education stakeholders such as school leaders and transition staff.

Resources

The WorkforceGPS site offers a [Sample MOU and Infrastructure Costs Toolkit](#) that provides clear, illustrative examples of how MOUs can be structured to align partner goals, clarify contributions, and support collaboration across the one-stop system. The toolkit demonstrates best practices such as defining overarching system goals, setting partner expectations up front, and ensuring that all levels of staff understand the purpose and content of the MOUs.



Developing MOUs: Key Elements and Considerations

WIOA regulations at [34 CFR §361.500](#) outline specific required elements for one-stop MOUs, but many effective agreements go further by delineating how partners collaborate, coordinate services, and support customers. Below is an outline of the required components and additional elements of MOUs that can enhance clarity and accountability.

1. Services Provided

This section of an MOU defines the services that each partner of the one-stop delivery system will deliver (e.g., Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs; vocational rehabilitation; adult education; Wagner-Peyser employment services; etc.).

Why it matters

MOUs ensure comprehensive service delivery, strengthen collaboration, and improve customer experience by leveraging different partners' expertise and resources, while minimizing duplication.

Best practices

- Develop a service matrix that outlines specific services each partner provides, including eligibility criteria.
- Include examples of integrated service delivery for clarity.
- Include examples of blended, braided, or sequenced funds and resources.

Resources

The WorkforceGPS blog post "[Partnering with the American Job Center Network](#)" highlights practical strategies for building and sustaining partnerships between YouthBuild programs and AJCs. Strategies emphasize the importance of developing shared goals, establishing communication protocols, and understanding each partner's role in supporting participant success. The blog further demonstrates how strong partnerships can expand access to career services, support co-enrollment, and create clear pathways for participants—results that align with the intent of MOUs under WIOA.



2. Coordination and Delivery

This section of an MOU describes how partners will coordinate efforts, leverage one another's resources, and deliver services collaboratively to improve services and outcomes for job seekers. It's important to recognize that certain program responsibilities, such as determining eligibility for training services, are governed by WIOA regulations and local board authority; the U.S. Department of Labor assigns the ultimate responsibility for determining who may receive training services to the local WDB. Through the procurement process or other arrangements outlined in the local MOU, however, the WDB may delegate this responsibility to the one-stop operator or designated service providers.

Why it matters

MOUs aim to eliminate redundancy, ensure efficiency, and improve the overall customer experience. [34 CFR 361.550](#) (also found jointly as [20 CFR 679.430](#)) specifies that a written agreement between the local WDB and chief elected official (CEO) is required when a single entity operates in more than one of the following roles: local fiscal agent, local WDB staff, one-stop operator, or direct provider of career services or training services. This regulation requires an MOU for the operation and shared costs of the AJCs in the local area.

MOUs are the product of local discussion and negotiation, and are an agreement developed and executed between the local WDB and the one-stop partners, with the agreement of the CEO and one-stop partners, relating to the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area. Two or more local areas in a region may develop a single joint MOU, if they are in a region that has submitted a regional plan under Section 106 of WIOA.

Best practices

- Detail how services will flow between partners, possibly using workflow charts or visual aids to highlight relationships.
- Detail the frequency and nature of regular coordination meetings to review and refine service delivery processes.
- Identify any shared or connected information systems that partners use to support communication or service tracking, or outline alternative methods when system sharing is not feasible.

3. Capacity Building

This section of an MOU ensures that staff working with other workforce partners (e.g., vocational rehabilitation, adult education, community colleges, behavioral health, developmental disabilities, etc.) have timely information about the services and supports available from partners, which may be specific for people eligible for services from multiple systems (e.g., people with disabilities).

Why it matters

Staff benefit from the knowledge and expertise of partners. Knowledge sharing results in efficiencies and cost savings, complementary rather than duplicative services, and better employment outcomes.

Best practices

- Support one another's efforts in serving individuals eligible for multiple services across systems.
- Provide training and support to partners' staff to improve efficiency and outcomes.
- Provide regular training for workforce staff and partners on promising practices to improve employment outcomes.

4. Customer Flow

This section of an MOU defines how individuals access services and offers strategies for referring them to appropriate programs.

Why it matters

MOUs reduce confusion for staff and customers, ensuring a more efficient service experience across programs.

Best practices

- Implement a single intake form/process and shared data system for seamless referrals and tracking.
- Create customer "journey maps" to optimize flow and reduce bottlenecks.
- Include information on other ways systems can facilitate a seamless experience for job seekers.

Resources

The Lincoln AJC's [Customer Flow and WIOA Title I Process Flow document](#) offers a clear, visual example of how customer intake, referrals, and service delivery can be streamlined within the one-stop system.

5. Partner Engagement and Collaboration

a. Participation Requirements

This section of an MOU specifies each partner's commitment to and responsibilities within the broader AJC or "one-stop" system.

Why it matters

MOUs hold partners accountable for their contributions and ensure active participation.



Best practices

- Define specific, measurable deliverables for each partner.
- Establish partner accountability strategies (e.g., setting up and supporting an accountability committee) to track participation and to address gaps.

Resources

The [Illinois WorkNet WIOA Public Documents](#) resource shows how partners can clearly define their commitments and responsibilities. It provides templates and agreements outlining measurable deliverables for each partner and highlights accountability strategies, such as formal reviews and methods to address participation gaps.

b. Operational Commitments

This section of an MOU details the staff, programs, resources, and facilities each partner will provide.

Why it matters

Partners use MOUs to ensure they provide adequate staff, training, and resources to meet customer needs.

Best practices

- Create staffing plans to ensure adequate coverage.
- Develop cross-training programs so partner staff can assist across service areas and provide a seamless experience for people who are eligible for services across systems.

6. Funding and Cost Sharing

a. Infrastructure Funding

This section of an MOU defines how to distribute shared operating costs among and across partners.

Why it matters

MOUs promote fairness and sustainability across systems.

Best practices

- Share a transparent cost allocation methodology, (e.g., proportional use, direct benefit, or blending, braiding, and sequencing), which involves coordinating multiple funding sources to support shared services while maintaining compliance with individual program requirements.

- Update funding agreements annually to reflect changes in usage or costs.

b. Additional Costs

This section of an MOU covers shared expenses beyond infrastructure, such as technology or staff training.

Why it matters

MOUs ensure adequate funding for all operational needs and helps partners create sustainable, collaborative funding strategies that ensure efficient operation of the one-stop system.

Best practices

- Create a contingency fund for unplanned expenses.
- Develop a joint technology fund for shared digital tools and platforms.

Resources

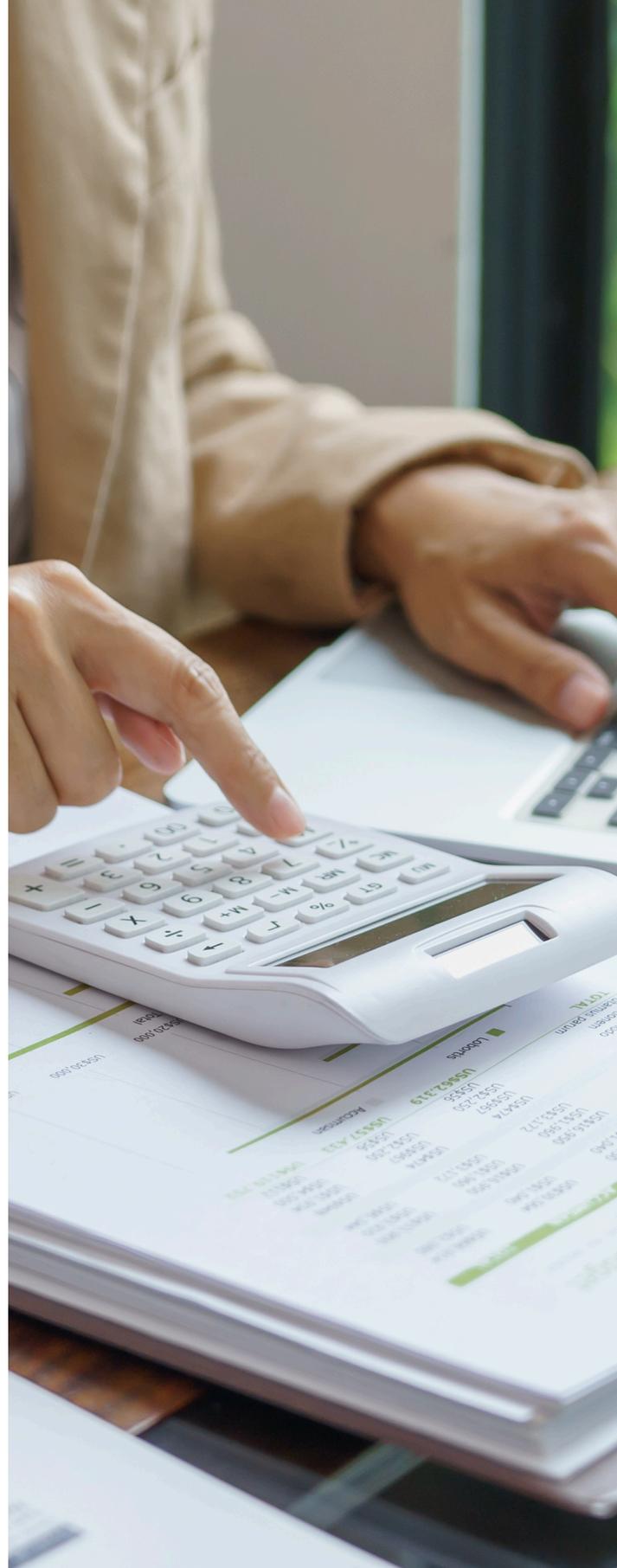
The Tennessee One-Stop Infrastructure Governor's Guidance provides a clear framework for developing fair and transparent infrastructure cost-sharing agreements among one-stop partners. It outlines cost allocation methods such as proportionate use and direct benefit, offers guidance on developing infrastructure funding agreements, and emphasizes compliance with WIOA requirements.

7. Performance and Accountability

This section establishes common objectives (i.e., shared goals) for the one-stop system leading to employment and career outcomes for job seekers.

Why it matters

- MOUs align partner efforts and ensure that partners support people to achieve measurable outcomes across systems.



Best practices

- Align goals across systems with state and federal workforce priorities.
- Establish shared benchmarks to celebrate small and major wins.

8. Duration and Modification

a. Effective Period

This section of an MOU specifies the timeline for the MOU, including start and end dates.

Why it matters

Keeping the agreement relevant and actionable ensures that partners remain aligned, responsibilities are clear, and service coordination continues to meet the needs of job seekers.

Best practices

- Set mid-period review dates to assess progress and relevance.
- Include sunset clauses for outdated provisions.

b. Amendments

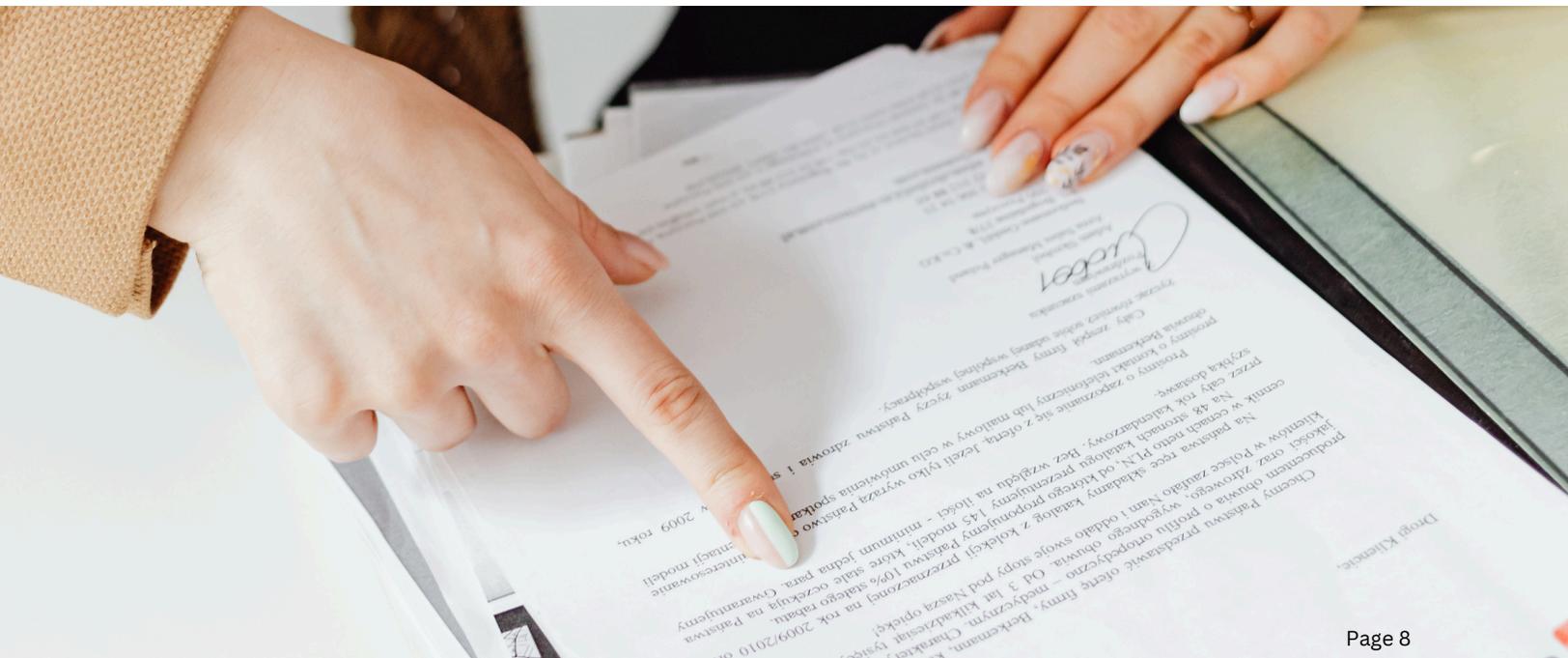
- This section of the MOU describes how changes to the MOU will be made.

Why it matters

- This section provides flexibility to adapt to new policies or partner roles and provides ways to include changes to the MOU.

Best practices

- Use addenda for minor changes to streamline the amendment process.
- Create a change request form for proposing modifications.



9. Signatures and Authorization

This section requires the MOU to be signed by individuals with authority (i.e., authorized representatives) to bind their organizations to the shared purpose, activities, and outcomes.

Why it matters

This section ensures the enforceability of the agreement, reflects organizational commitments, a shared vision, and shared outcomes.

Best practices

- Ensure signatories receive a detailed briefing on the MOU before signing.
- Maintain up-to-date contact information for all signatories.

Enhancing MOUs: Streamlining Customer Service

Strong MOUs outline partner roles, funding, and coordination efforts. They can also help remove barriers, enhance efficiency, and ensure that job seekers receive streamlined, high-quality services. Effective MOUs may also contain data-sharing strategies, strategies for protecting customer data, and methods for referrals that contribute to seamless service delivery across partners.

1. Digital Tools and Connectivity

This section of an MOU outlines how partners will share customer information securely and legally to streamline referrals, coordinate services, and support co-enrollment.

Why it matters

Reliable technology and connectivity can help achieve WIOA's vision of broad engagement in workforce programs. By ensuring that job seekers can use technology effectively and receive digital skills training, this section supports a job seeker's ability to succeed in a modern labor market.

Best practices

- Include commitments to collaborate on planning efforts related to technological tools and digital connectivity.
- Identify strategies to expand availability of broadband, devices, and digital literacy support across programs.
- Ensure physical and programmatic access to technology for all customers, including individuals with disabilities.

2. Data-Sharing Agreements

This section of a MOU outlines how partners will share customer information securely and legally to streamline referrals, coordinate services, and support co-enrollment, while complying with privacy laws.

Why it matters

Clear data-sharing agreements prevent duplication, reduce the burden on customers to provide the same information multiple times, and allow staff to deliver more coordinated and informed services.

Best practices

- Develop a formal data-sharing agreement outlining what data is shared, who has access, and how data is protected.
- Include provisions for regular review and updates to data agreements.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state privacy requirements.

Resources

The WorkforceGPS collection on [Data Sharing and Performance](#) offers guidance and best practices for how one-stop partners can collaborate on data exchange while respecting confidentiality and statutory restrictions. This resource highlights common intake models, methods for coordinating client data across programs, strategies to protect participant privacy, and approaches to support coenrollment and performance reporting.

3. Universal Release of Information

This section of a MOU ensures that partners use a single, standardized release form to obtain customer consent for sharing information across programs.

Why it matters

Universal release forms reduce administrative burdens on both customers and staff by eliminating the need for multiple, program-specific consent forms. The forms also support efficient referrals and coordinated service delivery.

Best practices

- Develop a universal release form, written in plain language, that clearly explains what information will be shared and how it will be used. The [Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board](#) developed a cross-agency release form, which can serve as a useful model for other regions.
- Ensure that customers understand their rights and can choose to opt in or out of specific information sharing.
- Regularly review and update the release form to reflect program changes or new legal requirements.

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