

WAC 388-310-1000 WorkFirst—Vocational education. (1) What is vocational education?

Vocational education is training that leads to a degree or certificate in a specific occupation, not to result in a bachelor's or advanced degree unless otherwise indicated in subsection (4) of this section, offered by an accredited:

- (a) Public and private technical college or school;
- (b) Community college;
- (c) Tribal college; or
- (d) Community based organizations for customized job skills training programs only.

(2) Vocational education may include one or more of the following:

- (a) Customized job skills training;
- (b) High-wage/high-demand training;
- (c) Approved homework and study activities associated with the educational activity;
- (d) Remedial/developmental education, prerequisites, basic education or English as a second language training deemed a necessary part of the vocational education program.

(3) What is customized job skills training?

Customized job skills training helps you learn skills needed for an identified entry-level job that pays more than average entry-level wages, and is an acceptable WorkFirst activity when an employer or industry commits to hiring or giving hiring preference upon completion.

(4) What is high-wage/high-demand training?

(a) There are two types of high-wage/high-demand full-time training options for WorkFirst participants to complete a certificate or degree that will lead to employment in a high-wage/high-demand occupation:

(i) Information technology, health care, or other professional-technical programs that allows recipients to start and finish a one-year or shorter state, community, or technical college training program in these fields or other professional-technical programs that meet high-wage/high-demand criteria.

(ii) Certificate/degree completion programs that allow recipients to finish the last year of any certificate or degree program, not to exceed a bachelor's degree, in a high-wage/high-demand field on an exception basis. Employment security department bases the high-wage/high-demand criteria on median income and high-demand occupations with the local labor market.

(b) The department may approve high-wage/high-demand training once in a lifetime without an approved exception to policy.

(c) To qualify for high-wage/high-demand training, you must also:

- (i) Meet all of the prerequisites;
- (ii) Be able to obtain the certificate or degree within twelve calendar months;
- (iii) Participate full time in the training program and make satisfactory progress;

(iv) Work with the employment security department during the last quarter of training for job placement; and

(v) Return to job search once you complete the educational program if still unemployed.

(5) When may vocational education be included in my individual responsibility plan?

The department may include vocational education in your individual responsibility plan for up to twelve months if:

(a) Your comprehensive evaluation shows that you:

(i) Need this education to become employed or get a better job; and

(ii) Are able to participate full time in vocational education or combine vocational education with any approved WorkFirst work activity.

(b) You are in an internship or practicum for up to twelve months that is paid or unpaid and required to complete a course of vocational training or to obtain a license or certificate in a high demand program;

(c) You have limited-English proficiency and lack job skills that are in demand for entry-level jobs in your area, and the vocational education program is the only way that you can acquire these skills (because there is no available work experience, community service or on-the-job training that can teach you these skills); or

(d) You meet the requirements in WAC 388-310-1450 and your comprehensive evaluation shows vocational education would help you find and keep employment.

(6) May I get help with paying the costs of vocational education?

WorkFirst may pay for the costs of vocational education, such as tuition or books, up to twelve months, if vocational education is in your individual responsibility plan and there is no other way to pay them. You may also get help with paying your child care costs through the working connections child care program if you meet criteria in chapter 110-15 WAC.

(7) May the department include vocational education in my individual responsibility plan longer than twelve months?

The department may increase the twelve-month limit for vocational education training to twenty-four months subject to funding appropriated specifically for this purpose.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.04.500, 74.04.510, 74.08.090, 74.08A.120, and 74.08A.250. WSR 20-22-020, § 388-310-1000, filed 10/23/20, effective 11/23/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.08A.250, 74.04.055, 74.08.090, 74.04.057 and 2017 c 156 § 1. WSR 17-24-009, § 388-310-1000, filed 11/27/17, effective 12/28/17. Statutory Authority: 45 C.F.R. 260, 42 U.S.C. 601, chapters 74.08A and 74.12 RCW, RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.08.090, and 74.04.057. WSR 09-14-019, § 388-310-1000, filed 6/22/09, effective 7/23/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.08.090. WSR 08-07-046, § 388-310-1000, filed 3/14/08, effective 5/1/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.050, 74.04.055, 74.04.057, 74.08.090. WSR 06-08-048, § 388-310-1000, filed 3/30/06, effective 5/1/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08A.010(4), 74.08A.340, 74.08.090, 74.04.050. WSR 02-15-067, § 388-310-1000, filed 7/11/02, effective 8/1/02. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 74.04.050. WSR 01-15-009, § 388-310-1000, filed 7/6/01, effective 8/6/01; WSR 99-10-027, § 388-310-1000, filed 4/28/99, effective 5/29/99; WSR 98-23-037, § 388-310-1000, filed 11/10/98, effective 12/11/98; WSR 97-20-129, § 388-310-1000, filed 10/1/97, effective 11/1/97.]