



Policy Update

Policy: UCLWDB Electronic Case Files Policy

Revision Date: December 15, 2020

What is the purpose of this policy?

This policy sets guidelines for creating and maintaining electronic records.

Have there been any changes since the last policy?

This policy incorporates recent TDLWD guidance that expands upon their previous policy regarding electronic records to now include:

- Timeliness and Accuracy of Reporting
- Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
- Document naming conventions

This version also more clearly states who is responsible for entering and maintaining electronic storage of fiscal items.

Action Required:

Within 15 days of the receipt of this policy it is the recipient's responsibility to ensure all staff are informed of the policy and create an internal process to ensure accountability.

**Upper Cumberland
Local Workforce Development Board
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Title: **ELECTRONIC CASE FILES POLICY**

Date of Adoption: September 25, 2018

Date of Revision: December 15, 2020

PURPOSE: This policy provides guidance for uniform, paperless documentation of participant files and includes instruction for the collection, dissemination, storage, and protection of information contained within Jobs4TN. Furthermore, this document addresses the timely entry of participant information into Job4TN, to include enrollment, registration in programs, and timely exit from programs. Standardized collection of participant information expedites participant eligibility determinations and allows Career Service Providers to focus on managing participant case files.

POLICY: This policy follows Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) Electronic Case Files guidance and applies to electronic file storage and documentation imaging standards in the administration of the following programs within the UCLWDB: Title I WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs, Title III Wagner-Peyser (WP), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T), and related assistance programs. The UCLWDB has followed TDLWD guidance and transitioned to paperless record keeping by using an electronic document imaging and storage systems known as Job4TN. To capitalize on the increased efficiency of data storage and retrieval, the TDLWD has revised the documentation process for determining eligibility and the maintenance of pertinent records. The TDLWD, and therefore the UCLWDB, elects to first utilize electronic documents and requires electronic verification of eligibility requirements.

INSTRUCTIONS:

A. Electronic Records:

All participant data for the WIOA programs will be entered into Jobs4TN. This will ensure consistent data is entered in all local AJCs, including affiliate sites. In order to case manage participants, AJC staff must use Jobs4TN to:

- Create participant applications
- Record all services provided
- Upload supporting documentation to verify eligibility
- Provide appropriate and timely case notes regarding interactions with participants that include information to address the 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when', 'why', and 'how' of service delivery.

The use of electronic records for participants will:

- Eliminate the need for storage areas and storage costs
- Decrease supply costs and paper waste
- Provide for an easily accessible, single point of access for file review
- Reduce staff time accessing hard copy documentation
- Ensures more secure storage of sensitive information
- Eliminates lost or misfiled paper documents
- Increases the consistency of file documentation
- Ensures complete verification for program eligibility

- B. Fiscal-Related Documentation:** Required procedures for maintenance of records regarding participant payments are at the discretion of the UCLWDB. All fiscal documentation and corresponding support submitted to the UCLWDB is required to be linked to the Jobs4TN record of individual payments. Each record of participant payment submitted must be labeled by the invoice number or other specific identifier used within the voucher payment in Jobs4TN to allow for monitoring and review. Failure to submit easily traceable and properly linked payments along with corresponding support will result in sanctions issued by the UCLWDB.
- C. Timeliness and Accuracy of Reporting:** All applicants must be processed immediately upon receiving services. However, there are allowable exceptions- such as a Rapid Response event. In such instances, the maximum allowable time to enter information into Jobs4TN is ten (10) business days. Furthermore, all eligibility intake information and documentation must be uploaded into Jobs4TN upon receipt. This also applies to the exiting of participants once they have completed all programs and are no longer receiving services. The Primary Indicators of Performance are based on the exit outcomes of these individuals. It is imperative that accurate information is entered into Jobs4TN in a timely manner in order to generate timely reports to the TDLWD. Therefore, this information needs to be input promptly (including documentation to support credentials or employment, when applicable). Once participants have exited programs, follow-up procedures and documentation concerning these individuals must be entered into Jobs4TN in a timely manner. Failure to do so will result in sanctions issued by the UCLWDB.
- D. Naming Conventions for Data Entry into Jobs4TN:** All service providers contracted by the UCLWDB are required to enter verification documents, upon receipt, into Jobs4TN for all active and exited participants. These documents must be properly labeled using TDLWD approved naming conventions (see Attachment I to this policy). Failure to label documents with proper naming conventions may result in sanctions issued by the UCLWDB.

E. Medical Records:

Participant medical records will not be kept electronically. Records containing identifiable health information – also known as protected health information (PHI) under the HIPAA Act of 1996 – such as health status, provision of health care, or payment for health care should be maintained in a secure area and in paper format.

F. Data Validation:

The State has established procedures to ensure the information contained in the WIOA federal reports is valid and reliable. Data Validation is the process of reviewing participant files for accuracy and compliance. Participant eligibility and verification documentation will be reviewed electronically using Jobs4TN/Virtual One Stop (VOS). Data validation will be completed quarterly at the direction of UCLWDB staff and annually by Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) staff. External and Internal monitoring will be conducted on participants files through electronic viewing as well.

G. Deleting Uploaded Documents:

Requests to delete a document that has already been saved to a participant's electronic file should be submitted to UCLWDB staff. UCLWDB staff will submit all requests to the TDLWD Central Office staff for review and consideration.

H. Record Maintenance:

Records will be kept that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports and to permit the tracing of funds to a level of expenditure adequate to ensure that the funds have not been spent on non-allowable activities. This guideline applies to both paper and electronic records. Although electronic files are intended to replace paper documents, records must be maintained in a manner that enables staff to produce a tangible, paper copy immediately upon request. These records will be maintained for a period of five (5) years from the close of the applicable program year.

I. Confidentiality of Data or Information and Required Release Forms:

Data or information acquired under a confidentiality agreement, to be used exclusively for statistical purposes, shall not be disclosed by an agency in identifiable form for any use other than an exclusively statistical purpose. Use of this information is prohibited except with the informed consent of the respondent.

A release of information form will be signed and dated by the participant and the Career Specialist. This form should state that the participant's information may be used for reporting purposes as a result of federal regulations associated with the benefit of federal funds, and that the participant's personal information will remain confidential. This form may be used as a stand-alone form or may be incorporated into other release forms used by the Career Service Provider. This form will be uploaded into the participant file in VOS to validate that the participant agrees to the release of information for reporting purposes.

J. Family Educational Rights and Privacy:

Educational records are covered under the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*, enacted in 1974. This federal law protects the privacy of student education records. Under this law, students have the right to control disclosure of their education records. Student's education records may be disclosed only with the parent or student's prior written consent, unless (34 CFR 99.31):

1. The disclosure is to other school officials, including teachers, within the agency or institution whom the agency or institution has determined to have legitimate educational interests
2. A contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom an agency or institution has outsourced institutional services or functions may be considered a school official under this paragraph provided that the outside party
 - Performs an institutional service or function for which the agency or institution would otherwise use employees;
 - Is under the direct control of the agency or institution with respect to the use and maintenance or education records; and
 - Is subject to the requirements of §99.33(a) governing the use and re-disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records.
3. An educational agency or institution must use reasonable methods to ensure that school officials obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interests. An educational agency or institution that does not use physical or technological access controls must ensure that its administrative policy for controlling access to education records is effective and that it remains in compliance with the legitimate education interest requirement of this section.
4. The disclosure is, subject to the requirements of §99.34, to officials of another school, school system, or institution or postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

Participants who attend training through WIOA funded programs should sign and date a form authorizing the release of educational records in order to obtain information or copies of certifications or diplomas from educational institutions for data validation and reporting purposes.

K. Legal Status of Electronic Documents:


Electronic records submitted or maintained in accordance with procedures developed under this title, or electronic signatures or other forms of electronic authentication used in accordance with such procedures shall not be denied legal effect, validity, or enforceability because such records are in electronic form (Public Law 105-277 Title XVII Section 1707).

For questions regarding this policy, contact Becky Hull, Executive Director, Upper Cumberland Local Workforce Development Board at bhull@ucworkforce.org

Attachments: TDLWD Naming Conventions

Effective Date: December 15, 2020

Policy Duration: Indefinite



Board Chairperson, UCLWDB

Document Naming Conventions

See below for a list of Document naming conventions for upload into the State's case management system (Jobs4TN):

Enrollment and Eligibility:

- Application signed by participant
- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Date of Birth
- Selective Service Registration
- Disability
- Veteran Status
- Employment Status
- Unemployment Status
- School status
- All public assistance
- Individual barriers
- Family size and family income
- Authorization to work
- Release forms (when applicable)
- Equal Opportunity Form

Individualized Services and Training:

- Training contracts and/or agreements
- Timesheets
- Invoices or voucher-related documents
- Any documents that relate to training and work experience activities that require documentation and verification

Measurable Skills Gain:

1. Pretest and post-test TABE or CASAS tests:

The actual tests need to be uploaded into Jobs4TN.

2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent:

The diploma or certificate need to be uploaded into Jobs4TN.

3. Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card:

For a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards, upload transcript or report card:

- Record the most recent date of the participant's transcript or report card for postsecondary education who complete a minimum of twelve (12) hours per semester; or
- For part time students a total of at least twelve (12) credit hours over the course of two completed consecutive semesters during the program year that shows a participant are meeting the State unit's academic standards.

4. Satisfactory (or Better) Progress Report:

Established milestones, such as completion of on-the-job (OJT) or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training (proof of a pay increase or a progress report from the training provider).

5. Successful Passage of an Exam:

Documents required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as knowledge-based exams, knowledge base exam results, occupational competency-based assessments, and other tests necessary for completion.

Attachment 1- Document Naming Conventions

Credential Documents:

- Secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Graduate Degree (Vocational Rehabilitation only)
- Occupational Licensure
- Occupational Certificate, to include Registered Apprenticeship and Career and Technical Education certificates
- Occupational Certification
- Other recognized certificates of industry/occupational skills completion sufficient to qualify for entry-level or advancement in employment

Exit and Outcome:

- Exclusionary support documentation (anything other than soft exit)
- Supplemental wage information (when applicable)
- School status at exit
- WIOA status/exit forms
- Copy of letter sent to individual indicating the case was closed
- Attendance Records
- Review of service records identifying the last qualifying service (and lack of a planned gap)

Supportive Services and Follow-Up:

- Any documentation needed to validate any support services given to a program participant during program participation
- Any documentation needed to validate any support services given to a Youth program participant after exit. Case notes are sufficient for an Adult or Dislocated Worker program participant in regards to follow up. Fundable services are only allowed for Youth after exit.
- Any documentation needed to validate any follow-up services given to a program participant after exit

Miscellaneous Items:

Any items that would not fall into any of these categories would need to be labeled accordingly if they are specific to your area. This process is to ensure uniformity statewide and ease in the monitoring process for the Program Accountability Unit (PAR) and during the Data Element Validation (DEV).