




INDIANA  
**WORKFORCE**  
DEVELOPMENT  
AND ITS **WorkOne** CENTERS

**TO:** Indiana's Workforce Investment System

**FROM:** Teresa L. Voors   
Commissioner, Indiana Department of Workforce Development

**DATE:** March 31, 2009

**SUBJECT:** DWD Policy 2008-36  
Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps, a 2009 Summer Youth Employment Program  
for Indiana's Balance of State Workforce Service Area

**Purpose**

This policy announces the establishment of the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps, the Indiana Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Summer Youth Employment Program for Indiana's Balance of State Workforce Service Area. This policy provides details for the program in conjunction with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Indiana's Regional Workforce Boards and their Regional Operators, WorkOne offices, and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

**Background**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides funding to each state for Workforce Investment Act Youth activities. Indiana's State Workforce Innovation Council voted to allocate this ARRA youth funding to the Balance of State Workforce Investment Board for 91 of Indiana's 92 counties and to the Indianapolis Private Industry Council, the Marion County Workforce Investment Board. This action follows the allocation formula established for Program Year 2008 by DWD Policy 2007-34, *Final Program Year 2008 Workforce Investment Act Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Formula Allocations*, issued on April 21, 2008.

The United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 14-08, *Guidance for Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act Funding in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and State Planning Requirements for Program Year 2009*, issued on March 18, 2009, indicates that "ETA strongly encourages states and local areas to use as much of these funds as possible to operate expanded summer youth employment opportunities during the summer of 2009, and provide as many youth as possible with summer employment opportunities...." The State Workforce Innovation Council, acting in its role as the Balance of State Workforce Investment Board, intends for this funding to support a summer youth employment program in 2009 for eligible participants called the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps. This program will provide an opportunity for Indiana youth to have positive work experiences while gaining measurable work readiness skills. The Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps will establish an employment program for approximately 2000 eligible participants.

### **Scope of Work**

Participants in the program will work at Indiana Department of Natural Resources sites throughout Indiana during the period of May 1 to September 30, 2009. Positions will range from housekeeping, carpentry, and agriculture to archaeology and graphic design. Participants may create nature trails, rehabilitate existing trails, or restore natural habitat and structures in Indiana's state parks. Participants will be seasonal workers, employed full-time and earning over minimum wage during the summer. The Department of Natural Resources will stipulate job descriptions, work requirements and required previous work experience, and identify sites where participants will be needed in each of the 91 counties in the Balance of State Workforce Service Area. The Regional Workforce Boards and their Regional Operators will coordinate the summer youth program in their counties, and shall name a Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinator for each WorkOne office in their region. This individual will be responsible for coordinating Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps activities with the appropriate Department of Natural Resources Worksite Supervisor and DWD staff.

### **Funding for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps**

Each Regional Workforce Board will receive funding for operation of the summer youth program, including recruitment, enrollment, and on-going service provision for eligible participants. The Department of Workforce Development will serve as the employer-of-record for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps, and will be responsible for paying the wages of the participants. The Department of Natural Resources will provide worksite supervision, and will work with the WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinators to ensure program participants have a meaningful work experience and measureable workforce readiness gains.

### **Determining Participant's Eligibility**

Participants in the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program must meet the general eligibility criteria for WIA Youth participants; however, the Recovery Act expands the age eligibility of youth participants to a maximum of 24 years old. Because the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps involves eligible youth participants working at Department of Natural Resources worksites, participants must be at least 16 years of age; therefore, all participants are required to be between the ages of 16 and 24 at the time of initial participation. Please refer to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's Policy 2007-06, issued on April 4, 2008, *Eligibility Determination and Data Validation Requirements for Youth Programs Provided by the WorkOne System* for guidance on the requirements for determining and validating eligibility for youth.

To be eligible for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program, the youth participant must be:

1. Age 16 to 24;
2. A low-income individual;
3. Possess one or more of the following barriers:
  - Deficient in basic literacy skills
  - School dropout
  - Homeless, runaway, or foster child
  - Pregnant or parenting
  - Disabled
  - Offender
  - Requires additional assistance to secure and hold employment;\*\*
4. Registered with the Selective Service, if male, and age 18+

\*\* For summer youth employment programs funded by the Recovery Act, states are given some latitude on those specifically eligible in order to increase the number of potential participants. For this reason, for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program, the State is stipulating that receiving unemployment compensation indicates that the participant has a barrier which would require additional assistance for the participant to secure and hold employment. This stipulation applies only to the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program and not to other WIA Youth programs.

The Department of Workforce Development is required to provide priority of services for veterans and eligible spouses pursuant to 20 CFR part 1010, the regulations implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in the Department of Labor job training programs under the Jobs for Veterans Act published at 73 Federal Regulations 78132 on December 19, 2008. For example, if two persons are eligible with all eligibility factors being the same, the veteran would have priority over the non-veteran.

In addition, Indiana is stipulating priority populations for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps to 1) those currently drawing unemployment insurance benefits, and 2) those enrolled in the Department of Workforce Development's Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG). WorkOne staff will coordinate identifying these potential participants. Once those two groups are exhausted, all other eligible youth shall be considered.

If a youth is enrolled under the barrier "deficient in basic literacy skills," that barrier must be verified through an assessment given to the youth by WorkOne staff. However, no remediation to correct the deficiency will need to be done during the summer youth program per the USDOL-ETA TEGL guidance.

#### **The Participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and Required Follow-up Activities**

Each youth enrolled in the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps must have an Individual Service Strategy for the summer months only. TEGL 14-08 provides states some flexibility on the development of this form. In addition, TEGL 14-08 provides states with flexibility to determine in what instances twelve month follow-up will be required for summer youth employment participants. Further guidance will be issued by the Department of Workforce Development detailing the minimum ISS requirements for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps participants and when follow-up will be required for these participants.

#### **Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Recruiting, Interviewing and Hiring Process**

DWD has established a website that provides a basic application and initial eligibility determination for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps. The address of this website is [www.IN.gov/yhcc](http://www.IN.gov/yhcc). All individuals who are interested in participating in the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program will be directed to the website to complete their initial application. State DWD will review all initial applications, and will notify "initially" eligible individuals that they have passed the first step of the application process. State DWD will then provide the applications to the WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinators. The WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinators **will contact the potential participants and provide them with details of the eligibility/assessment and interview process for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program.**

WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinators are responsible for determining the eligibility of Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps participants and referring eligible individuals for interviews. The hiring process will consist of one required interview with a WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinator, a Department of Natural Resources staff person, *and* a WorkOne Department of Workforce Development manager. Because the Department of Workforce Development is the employer-of-record for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program, the DWD WorkOne manager will be charged with making the final hiring decision, and providing an "official offer of work letter" to those eligible participants selected for positions. WorkOne DWD staff assisting in the interview process shall charge their time in this process to Wagner-Peyser funding.

### **Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Enrollment**

The Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps is intended to be a stand-alone summer youth employment program provided by WIA Youth funding made available in ARRA. For this reason, participants enrolled in the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program do not have to be enrolled into other WIA programs. Regional Workforce Boards shall have the discretion to determine in what instances Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps participants may be enrolled into other employment and training programs. However, persons that are not eligible for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program shall be enrolled following the shared customer pool guidelines established in DWD Policy 2007-20, *Regional Integration Policy*, issued on November 15, 2007. Those ineligible persons over age 21 would be enrolled in WIA Adult or Dislocated Worker. Those ineligible under age 21 would be enrolled in WIA youth. Those persons enrolled in regular Workforce Investment Act programs would be subject to Common Measures unlike those in the summer youth program.

### **Coordination of WorkOne and Department of Natural Resources Staff and Payroll**

The designated WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinator in each WorkOne office chosen by the Regional Workforce Board and Regional Operator will work with a designated Department of Natural Resources Worksite Supervisor in their region. Both will work closely in their counties' DNR worksites during the period of the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps summer youth program. The WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinators will be expected to visit at least weekly their assigned county DNR worksites where Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps participants are assigned.

Each Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps participant will be paid on a bi-weekly basis. DWD will be responsible for all payroll and tax considerations for the program participants. At the close of each bi-weekly pay period, the Department of Natural Resources will provide to each Regional Workforce Board and its Regional Operator, a spreadsheet indicating the names and hours worked by each program participant and to State DWD, the timesheets for payroll processing. These spreadsheets should be reviewed by the WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinators to address any other issues such as absenteeism because the Coordinators monitor the program. Also, the WorkOne Lead Coordinators must be readily available to provide services including direct support as requested by DNR Worksite Supervisors at their job sites. Additional requirements for WorkOne Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Lead Coordinator staff will be identified in Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps grants to Regional Workforce Boards.

### **Orientation for Summer Youth Participants**

Each region will be responsible for an orientation program for all summer youth participants which will be one or two days in length before the work experience begins. At that time, training will be presented by WorkOne staff and Indiana Department of Natural Resources personnel. Curriculum will involve safety, project equipment to be used and job place expectations. Specific guidance on the required subjects to be covered in this orientation will be provided by State DWD staff so that the guidance is consistent throughout the regions.

### **Summer Youth Program Performance**

The Recovery Act states that “the work readiness indicator will be the only indicator to assess the effectiveness of summer employment” (see USDOL ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter, No. 14-08, issued on March 18, 2009, page 23). The Workforce Readiness Skills Goal is explained in USDOL ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-05, *Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration’s (ETA) Performance Accountability System and Related Performance Issues*, issued on February 17, 2006, Attachment B: Definitions of Key Terms. Before beginning the work experience portion of the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program, each hired summer youth participant will receive a pre-assessment regarding work readiness skills. Each participant will take a post-assessment at the end of the program to measure increases in work readiness skills. In addition, TEGL 14-08 indicates that the State will be measured on the summer employment completion rate. There will be a standard assessment tool used by the regions for this purpose. Details on that assessment tool will be forthcoming as will specific details on how performance will be measured.

### **WorkOne Reporting Requirements in the TrackOne Case Management System**

Participants in the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program will be reported separately in the TrackOne Case Management System. The funding stream for the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps program will be “YHCC –Summer 09” The United States Department of Labor has announced that separate reports for ARRA funding will be required, but the details of that reporting procedure have not yet been announced. DWD will release guidance when DOL reporting requirements have been disseminated.

### **Review Date**

November 30, 2009

### **Ownership**

Brianna Morse, State Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps Coordinator

Leslie Crist, Director of Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives

Indiana Department of Workforce Development

10 North Senate Avenue

Indianapolis, IN 46204

[bmorse@dwd.IN.gov](mailto:bmorse@dwd.IN.gov)

### **Effective Date**

Immediately

### **Action**

All WorkOne staff in the Balance of State Workforce Service Area shall be knowledgeable of the contents of this policy regarding the Young Hoosiers Conservation Corps 2009 Summer Youth Employment Program so that successful coordination of this opportunity for Indiana’s eligible youth occurs with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.