

MERCED COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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POLICY BULLETIN

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| MCWDB PB # 09-21 | Date of Release: March 24, 2021 |
| To: | All Merced County Workforce Development Board Staff and Service Providers |
| From: | Erick Serrato, Merced County Workforce Development Board |
| Effective Date: | March 24, 2021 |
| Subject: | Basic Skills Deficient |
| Responsible Official: | MCWDB Program Manager |

Background

Basic Skills Deficient means, with respect to an individual—

- (a) who is a youth, with English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- (b) who is a youth or adult, and is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Policy

Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) Regulation §681.290 provides the State or Local WDB with the authority to establish its own policy on Part B of the Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) definition. The State of California Local Plan criteria to determine whether an individual is BSD includes the following:

- Lacks a high school diploma or high school equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education.
- Enrolled in a Title II Adult Education/Literacy program.
- English, reading, writing, or computing skills at an 8.9 or below grade level.
- Determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff-documented observations.

The State of California Local Plan further gives authority to the Local Areas to establish other objective criteria determined to be appropriate. Other criteria determined appropriate for Adult only BSD includes (in addition to standard requirements for all case notes, those case notes must also detail how that determination was made):

- Lack of computer literacy such as non-technical knowledge of computers and how to use them and/or familiarity and experience with computers, software, and computer systems.
- Lack of Financial Literacy: Financial literacy refers to having knowledge and skills that they needed to achieve long-term financial stability. This knowledge and skills encompass topics such as creating budgets; setting up checking and saving accounts; managing spending, credit, and debt; understanding credit reports and credit scores; and protecting against identify theft.
- Lack of ability to fill out basic medical forms and job applications
- Lack of ability to follow basic written instructions and diagrams without help, or with basic help.
- Lack of ability to relay information accurately.
- Lack of ability to receive, attend to, interpret, and respond to verbal messages and other cues.
- Lack of ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide with whole numbers up to 3 digits

Local exemptions to BSD for individuals to not be considered BSD are those individuals:

- Who have obtained an Associate's degree or higher, or
- Who are enrolled and attending a multi-semester career technical education program, such as Licensed Vocational Nurse, and who are within two semesters of graduating, or
- Individuals who have successfully maintained high-skilled or professional employment.

All assessments or determinations must be made within 60 days of the initial application and noted in the appropriately in CalJOBS' WIOA Application. Formal assessment results within the last six months, provided by the participant or a partner agency, are acceptable to use in place of formal Objective Assessments.

References

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 2014
Workforce Services Directive (WSD17-07), WIOA Youth Program Directives
Workforce Services Directive (WSD 15-14), WIOA Adult Program Priority of Services
Federal WIOA Regulation §681.290
California State Plan (pg. 286)