



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY
Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

News Release

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Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to benefit Arizona Business Community, Workforce Development Activities

PHOENIX – The Department of Economic Security today welcomed the recent passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) by leaders in our nation’s capital. The passage of the Act will benefit Arizona by continuing to provide funding for Arizona-based workforce development activities, refocus outreach efforts to different populations and provide the business community with a more streamlined, coordinated workforce system that will align the needs of employers with the sector strategies of the state. Efforts with the business community are targeted to ensure Arizona’s citizens are trained and prepared to meet the needs of employers.

The WIOA reauthorizes the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 and authorizes employment centers that help with resume writing, job searches, English as a Second Language instruction and on-the-job training. It contains specific programs targeting particularly vulnerable groups, such as laid-off workers and veterans with disabilities.

“The changes made to the WIOA are a step toward ensuring that all individuals can obtain skills necessary to provide competitive, integrated employment to our business community,” said Director Clarence H. Carter. “Our staff in the DES Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services is ready to embrace these changes and move forward to continue to build a competitive and skilled workforce in Arizona.”

DES serves as a coordinating partner for Arizona’s workforce system, [Arizona Workforce Connection](#), which serves more than 100,000 citizens through State and locally administered programs. Several of these programs will be impacted by the passage of the WIOA. These impacts include:

- *A 17 percent increase in WIOA grant monies allocated to Arizona between FY 2015 and FY 2020. Additionally, funding for the Independent Living Program operated by the DES Rehabilitation Services Administration will also increase by 17 percent during the same period.*
- *Restoring the use of 15 percent of allocated funds for the administration of statewide workforce related activities. In recent years, this allocation had been reduced to as low as five percent and currently is 8.75 percent.*
- *Applying common performance measures to all federal workforce programs.*
- *Repealing the “sequence of services” provision which will streamline access to services for consumers.*
- *Allowing the option to use non-federal funds to help support and run the State and local boards.*
- *Emphasizing job preparation activities for youth and individuals with disabilities.*

For more information about DES Employment Services, please visit www.azdes.gov.

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