

Technical Assistance (TA) Guide – Case Notes

This TA Guide is to provide guidance for completing case notes for participants enrolled in WIOA Title 1 programs. This TA Guide is not meant to be all-inclusive but rather a guide to our service providers. It is the responsibility of the service providers to review all applicable policies.

Case notes should tell the ‘story’ of the participant from the time of enrollment to current, so that any staff member or monitor is able to understand the activity that has occurred. Case notes are vital for detailing what is being provided to participants and justifying WIOA enrollment. Several data validation elements, such as last date of service, last date of training, and employment at participation may be verified with case notes.

Case notes must be entered to document every point of contact with a participant. Case notes should be factual and not reflect personal opinions. If an opinion is necessary, it must be relevant to the individual’s WIOA participation and progress and must be labeled as an opinion.

Case notes should vary for each individual and we should not see the same case note “copied and pasted” for participants. Case notes should contain:

* Description of the context of the interaction
* Purpose of the interaction
* Content of the conversation
* Outcome of the interaction
* Plans and next steps or next meeting

To meet data validation requirements, at minimum, case notes must include the following:

* When was the service delivered or provided
* What did the Career Advisor do for the individual or what partner funded service did the participant receive

The following items do not constitute a WIOA service; while they can be documented in case notes, the Career Advisor should not record an “activity” code that a service was provided:

* + Leaving messages or sending text messages
  + Speaking with family members
  + Sending flyers, letters, or postcards to a participant
  + Speaking with a participant’s probation/parole officer
  + Casual conversation with participant (unrelated to the program) in a public place
  + Having the participant bring in time and/or attendance records for payment when no meaningful service/discussion/guidance has been provided
  + Sending “contact me” or “contact our offices” messages via email, text, US Postal Service, or phone
  + Regular contact with participant to “only” obtain information regarding employment, educational status, need for supportive service; - there must be a “meaningful” service provided to record an activity code
  + Commentary/opinions about the participant’s personal circumstances that are unrelated to employment and training activities and pursuits

Remember, case notes tell the participants story to someone who does not know nor work with the participant on a daily basis. You never want anyone to have to go “digging” for information while reviewing a participants file.

Additional notes:

* View every case note as a legal document and remember, this is a federal program and we are required to maintain compliance with all federal, state, and local laws
* Use clear, concise language and professional terminology – no slang, abbreviations, street language, clichés, or jargon
* Do not include any comments or details that are not directly related to the participants enrollment
* There are many types of case notes, be sure you are aware of them and what needs to be recorded in each one.

If you need additional technical assistance, please contact the Local Area.

Applicable policies:

* On-the-Job Training
* Supportive Services
* Individual Training Account
* NCWorks Service Activity Codes, Case Notes and Exit Dates
* Electronic Files and Personally Identifiable Information
* Program Exit, Follow-up and Reenrollment
* Residency Requirements
* Adult and Dislocated Worker Work Experience
* Youth Work Experience
* Youth Incentives