

BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number 03-12-004-03-390, issued to the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training.

WHY READ THE REPORT

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a performance audit of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult and Dislocated Worker program participants co-enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser program. The Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) awards more than \$2 billion annually to State Workforce Agencies (SWA) to operate the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs. Through separate funding streams provided to the SWAs, the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs deliver similar core and intensive services such as job search, placement assistance, and assessment services. In February 2006, ETA issued guidance to SWAs, encouraging them to co-enroll individuals in multiple programs because ETA believed doing so would help integrate services and improve participant outcomes. Currently, there are no statutory or regulatory requirements or goals for the SWAs or Local Workforce Agencies (LWA) to implement co-enrollment. ETA officials stated that co-enrollment is only a voluntary tool to facilitate service delivery.

WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT

We conducted this audit to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent have SWAs and LWAs co-enrolled participants in the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs?
2. What steps have SWAs and LWAs taken to ensure the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and the Wagner-Peyser employment program bear their fair share of costs?
3. What challenges, if any, remain as a result of implementing co-enrollment?

READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full agency response, go to:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2012/03-12-004-03-390.pdf>.

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CHANGES CAN PROVIDE ETA BETTER INFORMATION ON PARTICIPANTS CO-ENROLLED IN WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT AND WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAMS

WHAT OIG FOUND

All but 1 of 53 SWAs reported they were co-enrolling participants in the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs. The SWAs collectively reported that approximately 88 percent of WIA Adult and Dislocated Workers nationwide were co-enrolled with Wagner-Peyser. Also, the SWAs and LWAs used cost-allocation plans and resource-sharing agreements to ensure that WIA and Wagner-Peyser programs bear their fair share of costs. ETA faces three challenges as a result of co-enrollment that are inherent in WIA's design to provide integrated services through multiple funding streams because: (1) a reporting mechanism was not developed that could capture the reality brought about by co-enrollment — how to account for and report outcomes on participants who were concurrently receiving services funded by multiple programs; (2) the SWAs' and LWAs' flexibility to co-enroll participants was impacted by the requirement that services funded by Wagner-Peyser be provided by State employees; and (3) the risk that LWAs provided duplicate services to participants increased due to co-enrollment.

Without an effective system to measure the outcomes of participants who were co-enrolled, ETA was not in a position to provide program managers, policymakers, and the public with relevant information about programs impacted by co-enrollment. The SWAs and LWAs faced challenges to comply with the service and reporting requirements of the multiple funding streams.

WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

We recommended ETA: 1) work with stakeholders in conceptualizing and developing a plan for a comprehensive unified reporting system; 2) identify and share practices used by SWAs to address the challenges of efficiently providing services by staff funded under WIA and Wagner-Peyser; and 3) notify SWAs that when co-enrolling it is important to ensure all one-stop center staff can access information on services provided to participants to avoid duplication of services.

In its response to the draft report, ETA generally agreed with the report recommendations.