

A-6 Target Population & Eligibility (Updated 2026)

Youth Target Population & Eligibility

Navigators are responsible for the successful outreach, recruitment, intake, and assessment of eligible youth, ensuring that all participants served are **100% Out-of-School Youth (OSY)**.

Navigators must collect and verify all required documentation to determine eligibility prior to enrollment. All eligibility determinations must be **accurate, documented, and compliant** with WIOA regulations and RochesterWorks policies.

Target Population

The primary focus of this program is to serve **older, disconnected OSY youth**, ages 16–24, residing in Monroe County, who are not attending school and face barriers to academic achievement and/or employment.

Local Policy: New OSY enrollments must be **no less than 17 years of age** at the time of enrollment.

Target populations include, but are not limited to:

- Youth referred by RochesterWorks Career Center staff
- Youth residing in urban, suburban, and rural areas across Monroe County
- Youth aging out of foster care
- Justice-involved youth or those at risk of involvement
- Children of incarcerated parent(s)
- Public assistance recipients
- Pregnant or parenting youth
- Runaway or homeless youth, or those at risk of homelessness
- Youth impacted by gang involvement or at risk of involvement
- Refugee or immigrant youth authorized to work in the United States
- Youth with disabilities who are able to work

Providers must implement **intentional outreach and engagement strategies** to effectively identify, recruit, and serve these populations.

Appropriateness for Enrollment

Prior to enrollment, Navigators must assess the appropriateness of each youth for WIOA services, including their **willingness and ability to engage in services and work toward program goals**.

If a youth is determined not appropriate for enrollment:

- The Navigator must refer the youth to alternative programs or community resources
- Referrals must be documented

Providers are expected to collaborate with partners to ensure youth are connected to appropriate services, even if not enrolled in WIOA.

Program Expectations

Providers are expected to:

- Leverage additional funding and partnerships to provide holistic services
- Maximize available resources, as WIOA youth funds are limited and restricted
- Ensure participants are supported toward positive performance outcomes (see A-5 for WIOA performance goals)

Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility must be determined in accordance with WIOA Section 129(a) and USDOL guidance.

An eligible Out-of-School Youth (OSY) is an individual who:

- Is not attending any school (as defined under State law)
- Is between the ages of 16 and 24 at the time of enrollment
- Meets one or more of the following barriers:
 - School dropout
 - Youth within compulsory school age who has not attended school for at least one complete school quarter
 - Recipient of a diploma/equivalent who is low-income and basic skills deficient or an English language learner
 - Offender
 - Homeless, runaway, or at risk of homelessness
 - Foster care, aged out of foster care, or in out-of-home placement
 - Pregnant or parenting
 - Individual with a disability
 - Low-income individual requiring additional assistance to enter or complete education or secure or retain employment

Participants may continue receiving services beyond age 24 if enrolled prior to that age.

Definition of “Requires Additional Assistance” (Local Policy)

The Local Workforce Development Board defines “requires additional assistance” as youth who meet one or more of the following:

- Substance use challenges
- Victim of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse
- Score below 75% on a Job Readiness Assessment Tool

This definition must be **applied consistently and documented**.

Veterans Priority of Service

For youth ages 18–24, when the eligible pool includes veterans or eligible spouses, priority of service must be provided in accordance with federal requirements.

Low-Income Requirements

Low-income status is required **only for specific OSY eligibility categories**, in accordance with WIOA regulations.

Providers must:

- Verify income where applicable
- Follow federal and state income guidelines
- Maintain documentation supporting eligibility determinations

A low-income individual is defined according to federal poverty guidelines and lower living standard income levels.

Income Guidelines and Determination

(Income guidelines can be found in the WIOA youth application packet)

Income Inclusion and Exclusion

Income Sources to Include or Exclude

Include For Determination	Do Not Include
• Wages, Salaries (<i>gross</i>), including Tips	• Public Assistance (<i>welfare: TANF, SSI, General Assistance</i>)
• Net earnings from self-employment	• Non-cash benefits (SNAP (<i>Food Stamps</i>), <i>Housing, Medicaid</i>)
• Interest & Dividends from savings &	• Lump-sum (<i>one-time</i>) Worker’s Comp

investments	
• Pension Income (<i>all types</i>)	• Lump-sum (<i>one-time</i>) Insurance Awards
• Rental Income (<i>net</i>)	• Lump-sum Inheritance
• Alimony	• Proceeds from sale of property
• Lifetime Annuities/awards	• Tax Refunds
• Disability Benefits (<i>except one-time lump-sum</i>)	• Loans
• Worker’s Compensation (<i>except one-time lump-sum</i>)	• Gifts
• College/university grants, aid fellowship	• Pell Grants or Federal Work Study
• Military Family Allotments	• Active Duty Pay for Veterans
• Unemployment Insurance Benefits *	
• Child Support *	

* Unemployment Insurance Benefits and child support may be excluded for purposes of Adult ITA and supportive services eligibility.

In cases permitted by regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor, an individual with a disability is considered a “family” of 1. Low-income determination is based on their income alone, despite whom they live with.

Eligibility Documentation Requirements

Navigators must:

- Collect and verify all required eligibility documentation
- Maintain complete and audit-ready participant files
- Enter eligibility data into OSOS accurately and timely

All eligibility determinations must be **supported by source documentation and maintained in audit-ready files at all times.**