



# Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

1 Division: Workforce Services Division  
2 Category: WIOA  
3 Effective Date: 07/01/2021  
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5 Policy No.: 06-20

## 6 Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Policy

7 **Background:** The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) established six primary performance  
8 accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of states and  
9 local workforce development areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the workforce  
10 development system. This policy is specific to the Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) indicator which measures the  
11 interim progress of participants who, during a program year, are enrolled in education or training services  
12 leading to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment. In addition, participants must achieve  
13 measurable skill gains; defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress  
14 towards such a credential or employment or secondary diploma (or the equivalent). The MSG indicator is not an  
15 exit-based measure. However, service provider staff should check regularly for any type of skill gain attained  
16 throughout the program year and procedures should be in place to support that process.

17 **Scope:** This policy applies to all service providers required to report MSGs to Montana Department of Labor  
18 & Industry (MDLI) as the administrative entity responsible for the operation of the WIOA Title 1B core programs.  
19 This policy is effective July 1, 2022.

### 20 Policy:

#### 21 A. MSG Description

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- 23 • An MSG is a measure of the documented progress (academic, technical, occupational, or professional)  
24 made by a participant in a training or education program toward obtaining a recognized postsecondary  
25 credential, secondary diploma or obtaining employment.
- 26 • An MSG measures skill progression or skill progress during education or training for each period of  
27 participation within a program year. It is different from other WIOA measures in the following important  
28 way: It is not an exit-based measure. Participants who continue to receive services as well as those who  
29 exited during the program year are included in the measure.
- 30 • An MSG may be counted as soon as it is earned - at any point during a program year up to June 30th.  
31 Although only the most recent MSG is used for performance outcomes, MDLI's Workforce Services  
32 Division must ensure that service provider staff record all MSGs achieved during a program year to  
33 reflect full accounting of gains reported to the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Congress,  
34 and other stakeholders.

#### 35 B. Participants

36 All participants in education or training programs, including Apprenticeship, Customized Training, or On-the-Job  
37 Training (OJT), that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials or employment or a secondary diploma (or the

38 equivalent) are included in the MSG performance indicator for the program year. This includes participants who  
39 exit during the program year, in addition to those who continue to receive services.

- 40 • Participants will be included in the measure on the date their education or training program starts.  
41 Since training or education programs are defined by each core program, the following participants are  
42 included by core program:
  - 43 ○ Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker - all participants in Title I Adult or Dislocated Worker-funded  
44 training, including work-based learning and training that leads to the secondary school  
45 equivalency.
  - 46 ○ Title I Youth – All in-school youth. Out-of-school youth are included if one of the following applies  
47 during participation in the Youth program.
    - 48 ▪ Occupational skills training program element;
    - 49 ▪ Secondary education;
    - 50 ▪ Postsecondary education;
    - 51 ▪ Title II-funded adult education concurrent with the Youth program;
    - 52 ▪ Youth Build program participation concurrent with the Youth program; or
    - 53 ▪ Job Corps program participation concurrent with the Youth program.
- 54 • **Please note:** As reflected in the Youth Program’s elements, On-The-Job Training (OJT) is considered a  
55 type of Work Experience (WEX) for youth and not training. Youth participating in an OJT will not be  
56 included in the MSG indicator for Youth participants.
- 57 • An MSG can be recorded for a participant at any time during the program year(s) for which they were  
58 enrolled.

### 59 C. Documentation of Progress

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61 Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress for MSGs are as follows:

- 62 • Educational Functioning Level (EFL)  
63 A participant who received instruction below the post-secondary level achieved at least one (1) EFL.  
64 In Montana, the EFL gain may be documented in one of two ways:
  - 65 ○ Compare the participant’s initial educational functioning level, as measured by pre-test results,  
66 with the participant’s educational functioning level as measured by post-test results. Pre- and  
67 post-test dates and results must be included in the participant’s file; or
  - 68 ○ For participants who exit a program below the postsecondary level and enroll in postsecondary  
69 education or training during the program year, an EFL gain may be reported. A program below  
70 the postsecondary level applies to participants enrolled in basic education. Post-secondary  
71 training or education enrollment must be documented by a data match, survey documentation,  
72 or program notes and results must be included in the participant’s file.
- 73 • Achievement of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent
  - 74 ○ A copy of the diploma or recognized equivalent which must be included in the participant’s file.
- 75 • Secondary or postsecondary report card or transcript that demonstrates satisfactory progress in  
76 meeting Montana’s academic standards
  - 77 ○ Secondary – documentation for one (1) semester; or
  - 78 ○ Postsecondary – documentation for a full-time student who completed twelve (12) hours per  
79 semester; or for part-time, a total of at least twelve (12) hours over the course of two (2)  
80 completed semesters (or equivalent) during a twelve (12)-month period.
- 81 • Training milestone through a satisfactory or better progress report related to an established milestone  
82 from an employer or training provider
  - 83 ○ The progress report’s format may vary; however, it still needs to be a progress report, reflecting  
84 substantive skill development.
  - 85 ○ Examples may include an increase in pay as a result of a new skill or increased performance;  
86 training reports on milestones completed as the participant masters required job skills; or steps  
87 to complete an OJT or apprenticeship.

- 88                   ○ **Please note:** On-The-Job Training (OJT) for a Youth participant is not considered an MSG and  
89                   would not be documented.
- 90                   ● Skills progression through successful passage of an exam
- 91                   ○ Documentation that the exam passed is required for a specific occupation or progress in  
92                   attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks. Examples  
93                   may include, but are not limited to –
- 94                   ▪ Passage of a component exam in the Registered Apprenticeship program; employer-  
95                   required knowledge-based exam; satisfactory achievement of an element on an industry  
96                   or occupational, competency-based assessment, and licensing or state exams; or
- 97                   ▪ Low-skilled adult participants in an adult education program whose measurable skill  
98                   gains in reading, writing, math, or English proficiency are tracked regularly; or
- 99                   ○ Other completion tests necessary to obtain a credential.
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101 **Monitoring and Technical Assistance:**

- 102                   ● A formal monitoring will be conducted by the entity designated by the SWIB.
- 103                   ● Technical assistance will be provided by the Title I Program Managers.
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105 **References:**

- 106                   ● [TEGL 10-16, Change 1 - Performance Accountability Guidance](#)
- 107                   ● [TEGL 7-18 - Guidance for Validating Jointly Required Performance Data Submitted Under WIOA](#)
- 108                   ● [TEGL 23-19 - Guidance for Validating Required Performance Data Submitted by Grant Recipients](#)
- 109                   ● [34 CFR 463.155 \(v\) WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance](#)