

Local Area Redesignation Application

This application will serve as your request for redesignation as a Local Workforce Development Area (local area) under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Examples of redesignated local areas include two areas proposing to merge into a new combined single local area, various local areas that will be combined in a new, single local area, or a local area that will be expanded to include part or parts of another current local area.

If the Governor’s Council for Workforce and Economic Development (State Board) determines the application is incomplete, it will either be returned or held until the necessary documentation is submitted.

Name of Local Area(s)	Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board	Western Oklahoma Workforce Board
Mailing Address	3813 N Santa Fe Ave Suite#135	1222 10 th Street Suite 115
City, State, Zip	Oklahoma City, Ok 73118	Woodward, OK 73801
Contact Person	Ashley Sellers	Rebecca Shuyler
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Local Area Levels of Performance

Performance Measures				
Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board				
Measure	Negotiated PY 2022	Actual PY 2022	Negotiated PY 2023	Actual PY 2023
Adult				
Entered Employment Rate (2nd quarter after exit)	70.0%	70.9%	70.0%	71.2%
Employment Retention Rate (4th quarter after exit)	68.0%	72.4%	68.0%	72.5%
Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit)	\$5,700	\$7,276	\$5,700	\$8,421
Credential Attainment Rate	68.9%	76.6%	68.9%	77.7%
Measurable Skill Gains	61.0%	63.4%	61.0%	59.4%
Dislocated Worker				
Entered Employment Rate (2nd quarter after exit)	74.0%	75.3%	74.0%	85.1%
Employment Retention Rate (4th quarter after exit)	72.0%	75.7%	72.0%	78.8%
Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit)	\$8,900	\$10,125	\$8,900	\$9,761

Credential Attainment Rate	75.3%	79.0%	75.3%	80.4%
Measurable Skill Gains	61.0%	70.4%	61.0%	78.8%
Youth (ages 14-24)				
Education or Employment Rate (2nd quarter after exit)	74.0%	80.8%	74.0%	79.6%
Employment Retention Rate (4th quarter after exit)	75.5%	77.8%	75.5%	80.6%
Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit)	\$3,900	\$5,604	\$3,900	\$6,604
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0%	63.8%	62.0%	72.7%
Measurable Skill Gains	59.0%	72.4%	59.0%	54.5%

Performance Measures				
Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board				
Measure	Negotiated PY 2022	Actual PY 2022	Negotiated PY 2023	Actual PY 2023
Adult				
Entered Employment Rate (2nd quarter after exit)	72.0%	80.7%	72.0%	80.2%
Employment Retention Rate (4th quarter after exit)	70.0%	78.8%	70.0%	72.7%
Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit)	\$5,675	\$7,051	\$5,675	\$6,410
Credential Attainment Rate	72.0%	85.6%	72.0%	84.1%
Measurable Skill Gains	67.0%	75.8%	67.0%	85.1%
Dislocated Worker				
Entered Employment Rate (2nd quarter after exit)	73.3%	85.7%	73.3%	87.8%
Employment Retention Rate (4th quarter after exit)	73.0%	85.8%	73.0%	84.8%
Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit)	\$8,400	\$9,873	\$8,400	\$10,727
Credential Attainment Rate	78.0%	98.3%	78.0%	93.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	80.0%	79.5%	80.0%	84.6%
Youth (ages 14-24)				
Education or Employment Rate (2nd quarter after exit)	75.0%	75.5%	75.0%	79.8%
Employment Retention Rate (4th quarter after exit)	76.0%	87.3%	76.0%	76.9%
Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit)	\$3,651	\$5,270	\$3,651	\$5,916
Credential Attainment Rate	70.0%	77.8%	70.0%	87.9%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.0%	78.2%	68.0%	88.2%

Redesignated Local Area Narrative

The proposed redesignation seeks to consolidate the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) into a consolidated local workforce development area. This strategic realignment aims to improve service delivery, streamline administrative functions, and enhance regional economic development efforts by leveraging shared resources, expertise, and labor market dynamics.

Both boards have a strong history of supporting job seekers and employers through coordinated workforce solutions across their respective service areas. However, evolving regional workforce needs, coupled with opportunities for operational efficiency and enhanced responsiveness to employers and job seekers, have prompted the pursuit of a single, cohesive governance structure.

The newly designated workforce development area will provide an integrated approach to workforce planning and service provision, enabling more effective alignment with state and federal priorities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This consolidation reflects the commitment of local elected officials and workforce leaders to ensure a more agile, unified system that supports business growth, talent development, and economic resilience across the region.

Local Area Considerations

Alignment with Labor Market and Economic Development:

Explain how the proposed redesignation aligns the local workforce development area with labor market areas, including details on growth industries and key occupations in the local labor market.

The proposed redesignation of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board into a single, workforce development area reflects a strategic alignment with the broader labor market dynamics of Central and Western Oklahoma. The combined service area shares critical economic and workforce characteristics, including common commuting patterns, interdependent labor pools, and a blend of urban, suburban, and rural employment hubs.

This redesignation supports better alignment with high-growth industries across the region such as:

- Healthcare and Social Assistance
- Transportation and Logistics
- Manufacturing (including Aerospace and Defense)
- Construction
- Energy and Utilities
- Agribusiness and Food Processing

Key occupations in these sectors—such as registered nurses, CDL drivers, machinists, industrial maintenance technicians, welders, heavy equipment operators, and line workers—are in high demand across both areas. Unifying the workforce system allows for broader regional coordination in training and placement efforts that are responsive to employer demand and ensure consistency in addressing occupational gaps across county lines.

Explain how the proposed redesignation aligns with a regional economic development area within Oklahoma.

The proposed redesignation of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) into a single workforce development area demonstrates strong alignment with regional economic development priorities across Oklahoma.

Both COWIB and WOWDB have historically worked closely with their respective local economic development councils, forging strong partnerships aimed at addressing workforce gaps, attracting new businesses, and supporting the expansion of existing industries. These relationships will not only be preserved but strengthened under the newly consolidated board. The unified structure will enable even deeper collaboration with local economic development leaders across the broader region, ensuring that workforce development strategies remain tightly integrated with economic growth initiatives.

The new board will also continue to engage directly with local Chambers of Commerce throughout the region. These Chambers are critical conveners of business and industry and have been vital partners in ensuring that workforce programs are responsive to the evolving needs of local employers. The redesignation allows for streamlined communication, coordinated employer outreach, and consistent messaging across multiple chambers, all of which contribute to a more unified and efficient system.

Ultimately, the redesignation enhances regional alignment by integrating workforce development into a broader economic strategy that supports business competitiveness, regional prosperity, and sustainable job growth across Central and Western Oklahoma.

Identify the level to which the service area affected by the boundary change is consistent with the local labor market (e.g., how will the service area improve, shift, or impact the existing labor market area?).

The proposed redesignation and consolidation of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) is carefully designed to align with the realities of the regional labor market while maintaining zero disruption to services for job seekers, employers, and community partners.

Both existing boards serve adjacent and interconnected labor markets with overlapping commuting patterns, similar industry needs, and shared workforce challenges. The combined

service area reflects these labor market realities by creating a more united and efficient region that supports:

- Increased access to services across rural and urban communities without duplicating efforts;
- Greater flexibility and consistency in responding to employer needs across the broader labor market;
- A more seamless customer experience for individuals and businesses who currently interact with both areas.

By aligning the new area with actual labor flows, transportation routes, and economic ties, the redesignation improves the consistency of workforce services while expanding capacity to deliver them strategically.

Most importantly, the transition will be managed with a strong focus on continuity of service. All One-Stop centers, workforce partners, and provider relationships will remain in place during and after the redesignation. The boards have proactively planned to:

- Maintain existing service locations and staff;
- Preserve current programming and provider relationships;
- Ensure that job seekers and employers experience no interruptions in support or delays in service delivery.

In addition, both boards will continue to collaborate closely with local elected officials and stakeholders to ensure that the governance transition is smooth, transparent, and well-communicated.

Overall, the service area shift does not disrupt labor market alignment—in fact, it enhances it by enabling greater regional coordination and removing administrative boundaries that do not reflect current economic patterns. Through careful planning and sustained partnerships, the redesignation will result in a stronger, more unified workforce system with zero service disruption and improved alignment with the needs of the regional labor market.

Resource Management and Administration:

Detail how the proposed local workforce development area will effectively administer activities under provisions of the WIOA, utilizing available federal and non-federal resources. Include descriptions of area education and training providers, the allocation of resources for training activities, and the percentage of overall resources administered by the local area that will be dedicated to training activities.

The proposed redesignation of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) into a consolidated local workforce development area will enhance the efficiency, consistency, and impact of WIOA

program administration. Both boards bring a shared philosophy of fiscal responsibility, direct service investment, and strong regional collaboration that will guide the administration of WIOA activities using both federal and non-federal resources.

COWIB and WOWDB both pride themselves on maintaining lean administrative structures that prioritize funding for direct participant services. In the newly consolidated area, this approach will continue—ensuring that the majority of available funds are dedicated to providing job seekers with the tools, training, and support they need to secure sustainable employment. Administrative costs will remain well below the allowable threshold, enabling more dollars to be directed toward impactful programming.

A substantial portion of WIOA Title I funds—typically over 40% of programmatic resources—is allocated toward training activities in both existing boards. This includes investments in:

- Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for approved programs on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)
- On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work-Based Learning opportunities
- Supportive services that ensure participant success in training
- Business services

This funding focus will continue post-redesignation, with a commitment to sustaining and expanding access to industry-relevant training that aligns with regional labor market demand.

The new area will continue to leverage a strong network of shared education and training partners, which currently serve both Central and Western Oklahoma. These providers include:

- Oklahoma CareerTech Centers, such as:
 - Metro Tech
 - Gordon Cooper Technology Center
 - Meridian Technology Center
 - Western Technology Center
 - Pioneer Technology Center
- Community Colleges and Universities, including:
 - Oklahoma City Community College (OCCC)
 - Redlands Community College
 - Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU)
 - University of Central Oklahoma (UCO)
 - Oklahoma State University (OSU)
 - University of Oklahoma (OU)
- Adult Education & Literacy providers
- Private training institutions with ETPL-approved programs
 - CDL U
 - American Truck Training
 - Dental Depot

These partnerships ensure access to a wide range of credentialed programs and industry-aligned training pathways across healthcare, manufacturing, skilled trades, transportation, IT, and energy sectors.

In addition to WIOA formula funds, the newly consolidated area will actively pursue federal discretionary grants, state initiatives, and non-federal investments to expand capacity and reach. Both boards have a proven track record of securing and managing competitive funding for special initiatives such as apprenticeships, reentry, youth, and sector partnerships. Partnerships with local employers, school districts, economic development councils, and philanthropic organizations further extend the resource base.

The proposed workforce development area will be well-positioned to administer WIOA activities effectively by maintaining a lean operational structure, prioritizing training investments, and leveraging a robust network of education providers. By building on shared infrastructure and longstanding provider relationships, the region will ensure efficient resource use, expanded access to training, and a continued commitment to quality workforce development services.

Performance and Fiscal Integrity:

Describe measures to ensure that the redesignation will improve the performance of the new local area.

The redesignation of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) into a single local workforce development area will build upon a strong record of performance excellence. Both boards have consistently met and exceeded all federally negotiated WIOA performance measures, demonstrating a shared commitment to accountability, quality service delivery, and continuous improvement.

A key advantage of this redesignation is that both areas already utilize the same service provider. This continuity ensures that proven service delivery models, case management practices, and performance-driven strategies will remain in place across the consolidated region. Having a common provider significantly reduces transition challenges, promotes consistency in customer service, and enables the rapid scaling of best practices throughout the new area.

Specific Measures to Sustain and Improve Performance

1. **Consistency in Service Delivery:** With one provider managing both regions, customers will continue to experience seamless services, ensuring no disruption in programming and a uniform application of successful strategies that drive outcomes.
2. **Standardization of Best Practices:** Proven methods that have contributed to exceeding performance goals—such as proactive employer engagement, individualized career

planning, and work-based learning strategies—will be standardized and expanded across the full service area.

3. Enhanced Employer and Sector Engagement: A larger, unified region will create opportunities to deepen sector partnerships, expand employer-driven training, and increase work-based learning opportunities—all of which directly contribute to stronger employment, credential, and earnings outcomes.
4. Staff Training and Alignment: Staff across the combined region will be cross-trained to ensure consistency in program delivery and compliance. This will maintain service quality while fostering innovation and collaboration among workforce professionals.

By merging two high-performing boards that already share a common service provider, the redesignation creates an opportunity to sustain proven success while improving efficiency and expanding impact. This alignment ensures that the new local workforce development area will continue to exceed federal performance standards and deliver high-quality outcomes for job seekers, employers, and communities.

Describe how the modification will maintain or improve the fiscal integrity of the new local area.

The proposed redesignation will maintain and strengthen the fiscal integrity of the new local workforce development area by building on established systems and proven practices already in place. Currently, the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) serves as the fiscal agent for both COWIB and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB). This arrangement has provided a stable framework of fiscal oversight, accountability, and compliance across both regions, and it will continue seamlessly following the consolidation.

Key Measures Ensuring Fiscal Integrity

1. Continuity of Fiscal Agent Role: COWIB will continue to serve as the fiscal agent for the consolidated area. This ensures continuity in financial management, grant oversight, and compliance functions with no disruption during the transition.
2. Proven Oversight and Compliance Record: In Fall 2024, the U.S. Department of Labor conducted a monitoring review of COWIB, covering 27 months of fiscal and programmatic records. All compliance findings were successfully resolved, and importantly, no disallowed costs were identified. This outcome reflects COWIB's strong capacity to maintain compliance with WIOA provisions and federal fiscal requirements.
3. Established Financial Systems and Internal Controls: COWIB's established policies, procedures, and internal controls will continue to guide fiscal management. These systems safeguard funds, ensure proper allocation, and support accurate reporting and accountability.
4. Economies of Scale and Efficiency: With the consolidation of the two boards into one workforce development area, the new structure will reduce duplicative administrative

costs, enabling a greater percentage of funds to flow to participant services, while maintaining strong fiscal accountability.

5. **Transparency and Accountability:** The new local board will continue robust fiscal reporting to board members, independent audits, and collaboration with state oversight entities, ensuring full transparency and maintaining stakeholder trust.

By retaining COWIB as fiscal agent, the redesignated area preserves proven systems of integrity and oversight while strengthening efficiency. The successful 2024 Department of Labor monitoring review—spanning over two years of records with no disallowed costs—provides clear evidence of COWIB’s fiscal stewardship. The consolidated workforce development area will not only maintain but also enhance fiscal integrity, ensuring that resources are effectively managed and directed toward impactful workforce services.

Impact on Partnerships and Resources:

How does the boundary change influence existing partnerships and leveraged resources?

The redesignation of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) into a combined workforce development area will strengthen, rather than disrupt, existing partnerships and leveraged resources.

Both COWIB and WOWDB have long-standing relationships with economic development councils, chambers of commerce, industry associations, education providers, and community-based organizations. These partnerships have been built around a shared commitment to workforce and economic growth and will continue seamlessly after the boundary change. Since many of these partners already operate across county or regional lines, the consolidation will create greater efficiency in collaboration and eliminate administrative barriers that sometimes limited joint efforts.

The two areas already share several training providers and educational institutions, including CareerTech centers, community colleges, universities, and adult education programs. The boundary change will allow these providers to work with a single workforce board, streamlining communication, coordination, and alignment of training investments. This creates opportunities for region-wide training initiatives, joint program development, and expanded work-based learning models that benefit both job seekers and employers.

By consolidating into one larger local area, the board will be better positioned to leverage additional funding opportunities, such as state initiatives and federal discretionary grants, which often favor regional approaches. Local governments, employers, and philanthropic partners will also benefit from a more unified platform for collaboration, ensuring that leveraged resources are maximized and directed toward high-impact workforce strategies.

Employers and chambers of commerce will experience a more consistent and unified system for workforce support, making it easier to engage in sector partnerships, apprenticeship development, and customized training initiatives. Importantly, employers who participate in work-based learning opportunities will benefit from consistent policies and procedures across the new workforce area, reducing administrative complexity and making it easier to expand training and hiring partnerships region-wide.

Explain how the boundary change will enhance and produce a more comprehensive and integrated workforce development system (e.g., how will local economic development efforts improve? How will service delivery improve? How will coordination improve between local private industry efforts and the local workforce board(s) to create jobs or foster economic development?).

The redesignation of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) into a consolidated workforce development area will significantly enhance the region’s ability to deliver a comprehensive, integrated, and employer-responsive workforce system. By removing artificial boundaries and creating a larger, coordinated service area, the new structure will strengthen economic development efforts, improve service delivery, and deepen collaboration with private industry.

Local economic development organizations have long recognized that regional growth does not stop at county lines. Many employers recruit, operate, and expand across the current Central and Western boundaries. The redesignation aligns workforce services with these realities, creating a single system that can seamlessly support business expansion, talent attraction, and job creation efforts across the broader region. This integration will also make it easier to collaborate with state and regional economic development partners, such as the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, chambers of commerce, and local development councils, by providing a single point of contact.

Job seekers and businesses alike will benefit from a more consistent and streamlined system. With one set of policies, procedures, and strategies guiding the new local workforce area, customers will experience greater continuity of services regardless of where they live or operate. This is particularly important for employers participating in work-based learning opportunities, who will now have access to consistent policies and supports throughout the entire region, making it easier to expand training and employment partnerships.

Because many industries—such as healthcare, logistics, manufacturing, construction, and energy—already cross the existing boundary lines, the redesignation will strengthen collaboration by eliminating duplicative efforts and fragmented outreach. A unified workforce board will provide one coordinated system for employer engagement, allowing for region-wide sector strategies, apprenticeship development, and talent pipeline initiatives that better meet the needs of industry.

By removing boundaries that no longer reflect economic and labor market realities, the redesignation creates a more comprehensive, aligned, and employer-driven workforce development system. It improves regional economic development collaboration, enhances the delivery of services, and strengthens coordination with private industry—ultimately creating a stronger and more competitive economy for the entire region.

Geographic Boundaries

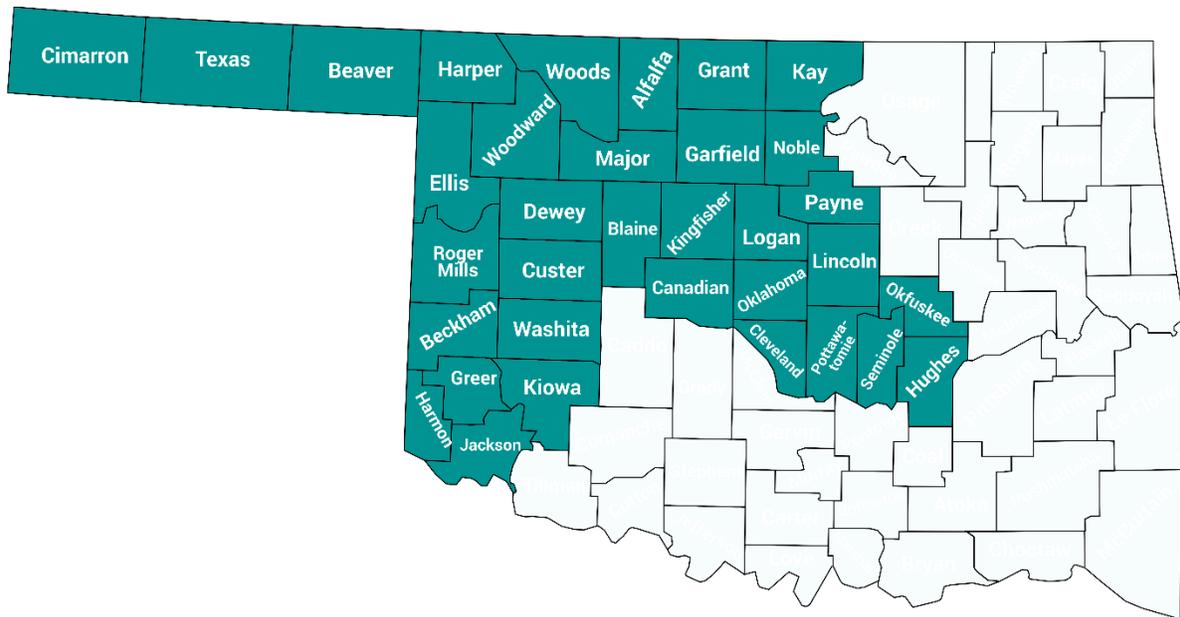
Describe the geographic modification to the affected local areas, including the exact boundary changes and their impact on the populations of the local areas involved.

The proposed redesignation will merge the service areas of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and the Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board (WOWDB) into a single local workforce development area. Currently, COWIB is responsible for nine counties in Central Oklahoma, encompassing the Oklahoma City metropolitan area and its surrounding communities, while WOWDB oversees a 25-county region in Western Oklahoma that spans primarily rural areas with strong agricultural, energy, and manufacturing bases. Under the redesignation, these two regions will come together to form a consolidated 34-county service area that better reflects the interconnected labor markets of Central and Western Oklahoma.

In terms of population, the Central Oklahoma area had 1,510,248 residents in 2024, while the Western Oklahoma area served 414,600 residents during the same year. Together, the newly designated workforce development area will serve a combined population of 1,924,848 people. This expanded service area reflects the diversity of Oklahoma’s workforce, encompassing large metropolitan hubs, smaller suburban communities, and rural towns. It creates a balanced system that can address the workforce needs of both urban employers seeking large talent pools and rural communities requiring more customized workforce solutions.

The impact of this geographic modification is significant. By unifying the Central and Western areas, the new local workforce development area eliminates artificial administrative boundaries that previously divided labor markets and sometimes created duplicative efforts. It brings continuity for employers and industries that already operate across both regions, and it allows for more coordinated and consistent service delivery. The result is a larger, more integrated system that expands access to programs, resources, and partnerships while better aligning with the real labor market patterns that shape economic activity in Oklahoma.

In summary, the consolidation of Central’s nine counties and Western’s 25 counties into a single 34-county workforce development area creates a stronger and more cohesive system. With a population of nearly two million residents, the new area will be better positioned to deliver responsive and effective workforce and economic development services across the full region.



Sustained Fiscal Integrity

The local area hereby certifies that it has not been found in violation of any of the following during either of the previous two program years:

1. **Final determination finding(s)** from audits, evaluations, or other reviews conducted by State or local governmental agencies or the Department of Labor identifying issues of fiscal integrity or mis expended funds due to the willful disregard or failure to comply with any WIOA requirement, such as failure to grant priority of service or verify participant eligibility; or
2. **Gross negligence** defined as a conscious and voluntary disregard of the need to use reasonable care, which is likely to cause foreseeable grave injury or harm to persons, property, or both; or
3. **Failure to observe accepted standards of administration.** Local areas must adhere to the uniform administrative requirements set forth in Title 2 CFR Part 200, and Title 29 CFR Parts 95 and 97. *Local areas must have fully met their federally mandated responsibilities for the two previous program years including timely reporting of WIAO participant and expenditure data, timely completion and submission of the required annual single audit and have not been placed on cash hold for longer than 30 days. [in alignment with WIOA Section 106(e)(2)]*