

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment and Training Administration

Workforce Investment Act of 1998

AGENCY: Employment and Training Administration, Labor.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to encourage comments on the Department of Labor's approach to the implementation of titles I, III, and V of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) (Pub. L. 105-220) (dated August 7, 1998). See Conference Report on H.R. 1385, Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Congressional Record, July 29, 1998, pp. H6604-H6694. Implementation of the title V provisions will be conducted in conjunction with the Department of Education. Comments are welcome on a variety of subjects, including: (1) issues and concerns that should be addressed in regulations; (2) issues and concerns that should be addressed in policy guidance; (3) questions relating to provisions in titles I, III, or V of the Act; and (4) suggestions or comments on the overall implementation plan, such as consultation strategies. This notice is not a proposed rule. The Department will consider comments an regulations through the rulemaking process. DATES: The Department invites written comments on the WIA in response to

this notice. Comments received on or before November 30, 1998 will be considered in the development of regulations and policy guidance, as well as the overall implementation strategy. The Interim Final Rule will be published by February 2, 1999. The Department has already begun consultation with various individuals within the workforce investment system and will continue these consultations throughout the implementation process.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to the Employment and Training Administration, Workforce Investment Implementation Taskforce, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S5513, Washington, D.C. 20210, Attention: Mr. Eric Johnson.

All comments will be available for public inspection and copying during normal business hours at the address listed above. Copies of the WIA are available at the address above, as well as on the WIA web site at http://usworkforce.org. Comments may be submitted electronically to that web address. Commenters wishing acknowledgment of receipt of their comments must submit them by certified mail, return receipt requested.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Eric Johnson, Workforce Investment Implementation Taskforce Office, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S5513, Washington, D.C. 20210, Telephone: (202) 219-0316

(voice) (This is not a toll-free number), or 1-800-326-2577 (TDD).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Signed into Law on August 7, 1998, the WIA of 1998 is the first major bill enacted to reform the nation's job training system in over 15 years. The purpose of the WIA is to provide workforce investment activities through statewide and local workforce investment systems that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants, and increase occupational skill attainment by participants, and as a result improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.

The Department will seek comments regarding ways to build strong Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) with sustained support by the community's major business leaders and with broad workforce development authority. The WIB will also take advantage of the flexibility in the Workforce Investment Act to examine the labor market and its needs, and develop an integrated system that is responsive to employers, youth and adult job seekers.

Timeline

The following timetable is proposed for implementing the Workforce Investment Act of 1998:

Establish the Website	September 1998.
Publish White Paper: Goals and Principles	September 1998.
Begin Consultations on Planning/Program/Policy Guidance	September 1998.
Regions and States Identify Closeout Issues	October 1998.
Publish Planning Guidance	November 1998.
Publish Interim Final Rule	February 1, 1999.
Early States Submit Plans	April 1, 1999.
Early State Implementation and Operation	July 1, 1999.
Publish Final Rule	December 31, 1999.
All States Implementing Workforce Investment Act	July 1, 2000.

Signed at Washington, D.C., this 8th day of September, 1998.

Raymond L. Bramucci,

Assistant Secretary of Labor.

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