

- **Educational Programs** is a component that improves basic skills or otherwise improves employability by expanding job search abilities. Only educational components that establish a direct link to job-readiness will be approved, although programs that involve articulated career pathways or stackable credentials that ultimately lead to employment are encouraged and allowed. Allowable educational programs may include:

Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency) - Programs that offer academic instruction and education services below the post-secondary level that increase an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; transition to postsecondary education and training; and obtain employment. Such programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), basic literacy, and high school equivalency (GED).

Minnesota only allows reimbursement for ABE/GED services provided to participants aged 21 or over. These services must be substantially differentiated from those already provided by existing education programs currently being offered at no cost to the general public. If these services are provided to persons other than E&T participants, the costs charged to E&T must be the same.

Workforce One Activity(ies): Adult Basic Education, Adult Diploma Program, GED Training.

Career/Technical Education Programs or Other Vocational Training - Organized activities at the post-secondary level that provide individuals with the academic and technical knowledge and skills necessary to prepare for further education and for careers in current or emerging employment sectors. Programs are primarily designed for those who are beyond the age of compulsory high school attendance. Ideally, such programs should be employer-driven and lead to industry-recognized certificates or credentials. Post-secondary training is limited to a 2-year associate degree level or lesser.

Workforce One Activity(ies): Credentialed Training.

English Language Acquisition - Designed to help English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language.

Workforce One Activity(ies): ESL/ELL Training.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)/Bridge Programs - Programs that provide adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or group of occupations for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Workforce One Activity(ies): Integrated Education Training (IET)/Bridge Programs.

Work Readiness Training - Intensive programs that include skill assessment and educational remediation services that prepare individuals for the workforce. Work readiness skills may include both foundational cognitive skills such as reading for information, applied mathematics, locating information, problem solving, and critical thinking and non-cognitive skills, or soft skills, which are defined as personal characteristics and behavioral skills that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance, and career prospects such as adaptability, integrity, cooperation, and workplace discipline.

Workforce One Activity(ies): Non-Credentialed Training.

Participants must make satisfactory progress toward completion of their overall employment goals. Participants will vary in their ability to benefit from educational programs, and programs will vary in their definitions of satisfactory progress. The ESP should become familiar with the standards for satisfactory progress in the program the participant plans to attend. If the participant had good cause for failing to attend or make satisfactory progress, the EP should be revised if necessary.

The ESP may not be charged more than the general public would pay for education. Federal regulations require that federal funds used for an educational component must not be used to supplant non-federal funds for existing educational services and activities.

Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency)

If the lack of basic education is a barrier to obtaining suitable employment, it will generally be identified during the employability assessment. In other cases, this issue may present itself during supervised job search or supervised job search training. In still other cases, it may not be identified until an ESP or another professional works more closely with the participant. Regardless of when the lack of basic skills is identified as an issue, the ESP may include Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Diploma Program (ADP), or General Education Development (GED) course work in the EP. Examples of when to include these activities in an EP include:

- ABE, ADP, or GED is considered the best path to employment.
- Low skill levels make it difficult to complete job applications, interfere with the ability to get, keep, or advance on the job, or are otherwise a barrier to self-sufficiency.
- The participant is very close (1 to 3 months) to completing 1 of these activities at the time of the assessment.

Career/Technical Education Programs or Other Vocational Training

Classroom training and educational activities may be included in an EP, but are limited to a 2-year associate degree or lesser. This may include prerequisite courses (other than a remedial course) that meet the requirements of a career or technical education program. In order for a post-secondary education program to be approved, the participant or the ESP must ensure that:

- The goals in the participant's EP could be met with the post-secondary training.
- There is a market for employees with the proposed training where the participant will (or is willing to) reside upon completion of the program.
- The participant can meet the requirements for admission into the program.
- There is a reasonable expectation that the participant will complete the training program based on such factors as their current assessment, previous education, training, work history, current motivation, and circumstances.

The ESP must ensure that the participant is making satisfactory progress in the program. Satisfactory progress must be defined in the participant's EP. The ESP may accept or modify the definition of satisfactory progress used by the educational institution where the participant is enrolled. Both classroom and study hours count toward the work requirement for time-limited participants. Though self-initiated students are not subject to the work and time limit provisions, to remain SNAP eligible, self-initiated students must maintain satisfactory progress in the program.

English Language Acquisition

When the ESP determines that the lack of English proficiency is a significant barrier to obtaining suitable employment, the ESP must address the issue when developing the participant's EP and should consider including participation in an English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Learner (ELL) program.

While it may sometimes be more difficult to find work with a limited ability to speak English, there are jobs that are available to participants with limited English language abilities. Participants who are not proficient in English should be informed of the opportunity to increase their income through work, and should be encouraged and assisted with job search if they are able to work immediately.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)/Bridge Programs

IET/Bridge programs are designed to build the foundational skills of individuals whose academic abilities do not meet the minimum requirements of a traditional post-secondary degree or certificate program. IET/Bridge programming provides enhanced support and programming for individuals through contextualized foundational instruction. For example, for a participant entering a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program, the reading instruction would be focused on healthcare terms and vocabulary. There may be an ABE/ESL/ELL instructor in the classroom teaching alongside the CNA instructor.

Most entry-level career pathways programs will fit into this activity. This activity may be used in conjunction with classroom training or other educational programs. For example, if a participant is attending ESL/ELL or ABE outside of the IET/Bridge program training, both activities must be opened in Workforce One (WF1).

IET/Bridge programs may be included in an EP, but are limited to a 2-year associate degree or lesser. In order for this program to be approved, the participant or the ESP must ensure that:

- The goals in the participant's EP could be met with additional training that will allow the participant entrance into a career pathway.
- The participant can meet the requirements for eligibility and/or admission into the program.
- There is a reasonable expectation that the participant will complete the training program based on such factors as their current assessment, previous education, training, work history, current motivation, and circumstances.

The ESP must ensure that the participant is making satisfactory progress in the program. Satisfactory progress must be defined in the participant's EP. The ESP may accept or modify the definition of satisfactory progress used by the educational institution where the participant is enrolled. Both classroom and study hours count toward the work requirement for time-limited participants. Though self-initiated students are not subject to the work and time limit provisions, to remain SNAP eligible, self-initiated students must maintain satisfactory progress in the program.

Work Readiness Training

Work readiness training includes intensive programs that include skill assessment and educational remediation services that prepare individuals for the workforce. Work readiness skills may include both foundational cognitive skills such as reading for information, applied mathematics, locating information, problem solving, and critical thinking and non-cognitive skills, or soft skills, which are defined as personal characteristics and behavioral skills that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance, and career prospects such as adaptability, integrity, cooperation, and workplace discipline. Work readiness training is intended to increase employability, but does not result in a recognized credential.