



Disability-Related Reporting in the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL)

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The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires states to report a number of key elements related to disability. These data elements, if properly understood and collected, can help states improve the quality of reporting and services for participants with disabilities. To help states better understand their reporting, and make changes to enhance the accuracy of the data, the LEAD Center¹ analyzed disability-related reporting data from the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL). This analysis shed light on specific PIRL data elements that are or are not being reported, as well as how reporting varies by geography. Rates of reporting are summarized on disability-related elements for participants of the WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (WP), and Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) programs from July 2016 to April 2019, and how this varies by states, counties², and ETA regions.

To discover the status of reporting in any state or local area, use the accompanying interactive data visualization – <http://drivedisabilityemployment.org/wioareporting>.

Key Findings

The LEAD Center’s analysis revealed a core set of findings on the reporting of disability-related PIRL elements, as highlighted below.

Nationwide, High Rates of Participants with Disabilities Do Not Disclose Their Type of Disability

- Of WIOA/WP/JVSG participants disclosing they have a disability, 73.7% of participants did not disclose their category of disability, e.g. blindness, chronic physical health condition, learning disability, etc. (PIRL data element 203).

A Few States Have High Rates of Reporting Across Most or All Disability-Related Elements

- Four states appear to be reporting well across all ten disability-related elements, as defined by having high rates of participants who disclosed having a disability above 9% and above 50% for category of disability³ while also reporting across all additional disability-related elements.

Other States have Ample Opportunities for Improvement

- Over a third of states reported abnormally low rates for other disability-related elements reporting that no participants (0%) reporting disabilities had any type of work

¹ The LEAD Center is led by Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) and National Disability Institute and is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

² We used participant county of residence instead of local workforce development area (LWDA) to allow for geographic visualization. Currently, there is not a dataset available for visually mapping LWDA's.

³ Defined high rate thresholds of reporting well are nationwide weighted averages.

setting (PIRL data element 207), customized employment (PIRL data element 208), or financial services (PIRL data element 209).

About the PIRL

The PIRL⁴ is a collection of individual records, each of which contains information about an individual participant’s characteristics, services received, and outcomes. It is a data layout that provides the framework for WIOA ensuring consistent and comparable data collection and reporting. There are ten PIRL disability-related federal reporting data elements. Nine of the data elements are new under WIOA; they apply only to participants who have disclosed they have a disability.

Findings

This section provides findings from SPR’s analyses providing more detail to the overview provided in the Key Findings section.

Individual with a Disability (PIRL Data Element 202)

Overall, 5.2% of WIOA/WP/JVSG participants nationwide disclosed having a disability.⁵ Large percentages of Adults (23.3%) and Dislocated Workers (23.9%) did not disclose their disability status, while nearly all (95%) youth reported their status. Non-disclosure means that a participant neither responded yes nor no when asked if they had a disability. Participant counts may overlap, as some participants may be co-enrolled. See Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: Participant Groups Disclosing having a Disability; Participant Groups Not Disclosing Disability Status

Participant Group	Disclosing having a Disability	Not Disclosing Disability Status
WIOA Adult Program (N = 1,951,276)	6.7% (N = 131,400)	23.3% (N = 454,864)
WIOA Dislocated Worker Program (N = 1,137,667)	4.8% (N = 54,661)	23.9% (N = 272,180)
WIOA Youth Program (N = 297,836)	15.1% (N = 45,040)	5.0% (N = 14,861)
WP/JVSG Programs (N = 11,912,046)	5% (N = 589,983)	9.9% (N = 1,177,855)

⁴ The DOL-only PIRL: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/reporting>. Also, please refer to the Data Guide tab within the interactive data visualization: <http://drivedisabilityemployment.org/wioareporting>.

⁵ According to the U.S. Census, approximately 10.2% of people aged 18-64 report having disabilities. Source: U.S. Census Bureau TableID: B18108. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?t=ACSST1Y2018.B18108&t=Age%20and%20Sex&vintage=2018>.

Additional Disability-Related Data Elements (PIRL 203, PIRL 204, PIRL 205, PIRL 206, PIRL 207, PIRL 208, PIRL 209, PIRL 939, and PIRL 940)

Once an individual reports having a disability (PIRL 202) there are nine additional disability-related data elements to report. The majority of these elements show very low rates of reporting overall. For example, 73.7% of participants nationwide did not disclose their category of disability⁶, e.g. blindness, chronic physical health condition, learning disability, etc. (PIRL 203).

The next three disability-related PIRL elements (PIRL 204, PIRL 205, and PIRL 206) indicate whether participants received services from the State Developmental Disabilities Agency, the Local or State Mental Health Agency, or Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services, respectively. There was a large amount of 'blank' data for these fields, e.g. one-fifth of states reported that no participants received any of these services. It would be helpful to find out how states are interpreting these definitions.

The next three PIRL elements (PIRL 207, PIRL 208, and PIRL 209) refer to participants with disabilities' work settings, customized employment, and financial services, respectively. For those participants disclosing a disability, only 1.2% report a work setting, 0.4% report having received customized employment services, and 0.3% report having received financial services.

The last two disability-related PIRL elements, Individualized Education Program and Section 504 Plan (PIRL 939 and PIRL 940), have very low reporting rates. For example:

- Nearly one-third (30.2%) of all participants reporting they have, or had, an Individualized Education Program come from one state. This represents 2,562 people.
- Almost one-fifth of all participants (19.7%) reporting they have a Section 504 plan come from one of three states. This represents 292 people.

Summary and Recommendations

While the LEAD Center found that the main disability data element contains the highest rates of reporting from WIOA/WP/JVSG participants, the findings across the additional disability elements give us reason to believe that more can be done to improve reporting across states and at the local level. We therefore have the following overarching recommendations for states:

- **Participate in future learning opportunities sponsored by DOL to learn more about the definitions of the disability-related PIRL elements.** Lower reporting rates are likely due to a misunderstanding of what many data elements intend to capture and how these

⁶ Because WIOA/WP/JVSG participants could select any of a number of categories of disabilities, for simplicity we chose to summarize this PIRL element dichotomously of having indicated at least one category of disability.

data can help both programs and stakeholders trying to understand the challenges faced by people with disabilities.

- **Share model practices.** Peer-to-peer training opportunities, with promising practice states and counties sharing their data collection and reporting practices, may help states and local areas with lower reporting rates.

Rates of reporting particular elements may be a result of many things, e.g. interpretations of PIRL definitions and/or reporting of other similar elements. As quarterly data are regularly reported, the LEAD Center will update the data visualization to reflect the presence of additional participants. This also will provide opportunities to explore trends over time as states begin to build their capacity to improve the quality of reporting these disability-related PIRL elements and, in turn, provide more informed and customized services to participants with disabilities.