

NRS Definitions for MAERS Data Fields

This document contains definitions for various data fields in MAERS as defined by the National Reporting System. This document can also be viewed in its entirety by clicking on the NRS Technical Assistance Guide link located at nrsw.org. The definitions are found on pages 42 through 50 of the document.

Barriers to Employment

Definitions. WIOA requires each core program to report the performance indicators disaggregated by the following 11 barriers to employment. These barriers are presumed to affect placement of the participant in unsubsidized employment and are self-identified by the participant at entry into each period of participation. Programs should report all categories to which the participant identifies.

- **Displaced homemaker**—The participant has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and (a) has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; (b) is the dependent spouse of a member of the armed forces on active duty whose family income is significantly reduced because of (i) a deployment or a call or order to active duty pursuant to a provision of law, (ii) a permanent change of station, or (iii) the service-connected death or disability of the member; and (c) is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
- **English language learner, low literacy level, cultural barriers**—The participant has either (a) limited ability in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language; (b) an inability to compute and solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job in the participant's family or in society; or (c) a perception of him- or herself as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs, or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting, or working that may serve as a hindrance to employment.
- **Exhausting Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) within 2 years**—The participant is within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), regardless of whether he or she is receiving these benefits at program entry.
- **Ex-offender**—The participant is a person who either (a) has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process for committing a status offense or delinquent act, or (b) requires assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction.
- **Homeless or runaway youth**—The participant lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; is a migratory child who in the preceding 36 months was required to move from one school district to another due to changes in the parent's or parent's spouse's seasonal employment in agriculture, dairy, or fishing work; or is under 18 years of age and absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission

of his or her family (i.e., runaway youth). However, a participant who may be sleeping in a temporary accommodation while away from home should not, as a result of that fact alone, be recorded as homeless.

- **Long-term unemployed**—The participant has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks.
- **Low-income**—The participant (a) receives, or in the 6 months prior to application to the program has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving in the past 6 months assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the TANF program, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, or State or local income-based public assistance; (b) is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of the poverty line or 70% of the lower living standard income level; (c) is a youth who receives, or is eligible to receive, a free or reduced-price lunch; (d) is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; (e) is a participant with a disability whose own income is the poverty line but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement; (f) is a homeless participant or homeless child or youth or runaway youth; or (g) is a youth living in a high-poverty area.
- **Migrant and seasonal farmworker**—The participant is a low-income individual who for 12 consecutive months out of the 24 months prior to application for the program involved has been primarily employed in agriculture or fish farming labor that is characterized by chronic unemployment or underemployment, and faces multiple barriers to economic self-sufficiency.
- **Individual with disabilities**—The participant indicates that he or she has any disability, defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the person's major life activities, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- **Single parent**—The participant is a single, separated, divorced, or widowed individual who has primary responsibility for one or more dependent children under age 18 (including single pregnant women).
- **Youth in foster care or who has aged out of system**—The participant is a person who is currently in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system.

Federal Reporting. The barriers to employment categories are used to disaggregate participants on the performance indicators in the joint ICR report.

Race/Ethnicity

Definition. Race or ethnicity is indicated by one or more of the following categories to which the participant self-identifies, appears to belong to, or is regarded in the community as belonging. Programs should report participants in only one of the following seven aggregate racial/ethnic categories at entry into each period of participation.

- **American Indian or Alaska Native**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and

who maintains a tribal affiliation or community attachment

- **Asian**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam
- **Black or African American**—A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa
- **Hispanic/Latino of any race**—A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term "Spanish origin" can be used in addition to "Hispanic/Latino or Latino."
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands
- **White**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa
- **More than one race**—A person having origins in two or more race categories and not Hispanic/Latino

Participants who identify themselves as Hispanic/Latino are reported only in that category.

Federal Reporting. The total number of participants by racial/ethnic group is reported in NRS Table 1 by EFL, and by age and gender in NRS Table 2. Race/ethnicity categories also are used to disaggregate participants on the performance indicators in the joint ICR report.

Gender

Definition. Designate whether the participant is male or female.

Federal Reporting. The total number of participants by gender is reported by EFL, age, and race/ethnicity in Table 1, and by age and ethnicity in Tables 2. Gender also is used to disaggregate participants on the performance indicators in the joint ICR report.

Age

Definition. Years since participant's date of birth.

Federal Reporting. The total number of participants is reported using the following age categories: 16–18 years, 19–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–54 years, 55–59 years, and 60 years and older, broken down by gender and ethnicity in Tables 2 and by program type in

Table 3. Age categories also are used to disaggregate participants on the performance indicators in the joint ICR report

Labor Force Status

Definition. Determine labor force status using the following categories. Report only one category.

- **Employed**—Participants who work as paid employees, work at their own business or farm, or work 15 hours or more per week as unpaid workers at a farm or business operated by a member of their family. Also included are participants who are not currently working but who have jobs or businesses from which they are temporarily absent.
- **Employed but received notice of termination of employment or military separation is pending**—Participant has received a notice of termination of employment or the employer has issued a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) or other notice that the facility or enterprise will close, or participant is a transitioning service member (i.e., within 12 months of separation or 24 months of retirement)
- **Unemployed**—Participants who are not employed but are seeking employment, are making specific efforts to find a job, and are available for work
- **Not in the labor force**—Participants who are not employed and are not seeking employment

Federal Reporting. The total number of participants by category is reported in Table 6.

Highest Degree or Level of School Completed

Definition. The highest number of years of formal schooling the participant has completed or the highest credential or degree the participant has achieved. Schooling in the United States or abroad is included.

Federal Reporting. The total number of participants completing the highest grade level or credential is reported for schooling either in the United States or abroad in Table 6 in the following categories: no schooling, Grades 1–5, Grades 6–8, Grades 9–12 (no diploma), high school or alternate credential, secondary school equivalent, some postsecondary education (no degree), postsecondary or professional degree, or unknown.

Program Types

- **Correctional Facility**—A program of instruction for adult criminal offenders in correctional institutions.
- **Community Correctional Program** – A program of instruction for a community-based rehabilitation facility or halfway house
- **Other Institutional** – A program of instruction for a community-based shelter or medical facility
- **Family Literacy Program** – A program with a literacy component for parents and children or other intergenerational literacy components
- **Workplace Literacy Program** – A program typically carried out in a setting provided by the workers' employer for the purpose of improving productivity through the improvement of literacy skills

Excluded Separation Reasons

- **24 Hour Support Facility** – A participant is unable to complete the program due to being committed to a 24-hour support facility
- **Called to Active Duty** – A participant is unable to complete the program due to leaving for active military duty
- **Deceased** – A participant becomes deceased prior to completion of the program
- **Incarcerated** – A participant is unable to complete the program due to being placed in jail
- **Medical Treatment for 90 or more consecutive days** – A participant is unable to complete the program due to being placed on long term medical treatment