

Policy for Establishing a Living Youth Definition in a High Poverty Area

I. INTRODUCTION

For a youth to be eligible to participate in the Youth Program, they must be an in-school or out-of-school youth. However, another eligibility criterion of equal importance is their economic or income level, especially for young people in school. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is aimed at supporting the occupational success of young people, in and out of school, so determining their eligibility, based on their family's income or their own income, is essential, when applicable considering the area of residence.

II. BASE LEGAL

Section 129(a)(2) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Section 681.260 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Rulebook.

"Training and Employment Guidance Letter 21-16" issued by the Employment and Training Program attached to the U.S. Department of Labor, on March 2, 2017 (TEGL 21-16).

III. DEFINITION – YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN A HIGH-POVERTY AREA

The WIOA Act, in addition to the low-income criterion, has included additional language that provides for the qualification of youth living in high-poverty areas. Section 681.260, of the Interpretative Regulations, establishes that an area of high poverty level is a census tract, an indigenous reservation, among other specific geographic and population areas, including counties, which in the case of Puerto Rico we refer to the Municipalities, which have a poverty rate of **25%** or more. This index is established by the "American Community Survey – 5 Years Data", published by the United States Census Bureau.

IV. DETERMINATION OF A HIGH-POVERTY AREA

The official designated to complete the process of determining youth eligibility must, in the first instance, determine whether the applicant is low-income under the Youth Program Eligibility Determination Policy, approved by the Local Board. If the young person does not qualify by the income criterion, it is determined if he or she lives in a High-Level Poverty Area.

A High-Level Poverty Zone is those, in the case of Puerto Rico, the Municipalities, whose 25% or more of the population lives below poverty rates. He is automatically considered a low-income young person.

Annex II of TEGL 21-16 establishes, step by step, the process by which the officer can identify whether the youth's place of residence is a High-Level Poverty Area. This process involves searching page <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml> for the poverty rate by municipality and making the determination based on the data provided by the American Community Survey – 5 Years Data. If the Municipality of residence of the young person has a population of less than 25% living below the poverty levels, Annex II of TEGL 21-16 also provides the process by which it can be verified through the specific address of residence.

The designated civil servant must bear in mind that the criterion of economic income is not the only one to be considered in the qualification process. This policy is adopted exclusively for the purpose of defining the High Level of Poverty Area and the impact of this on the eligibility determination process.

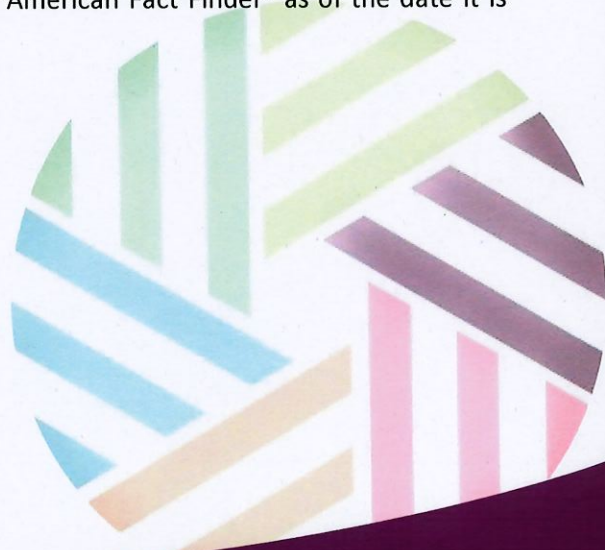
V. AREAS OF HIGH POVERTY

The poverty levels for the municipalities that make up the Local Area are as follows:

MUNICIPALITY	% POVERTY LEVEL
Las Marías	58
Mayagüez	51.1

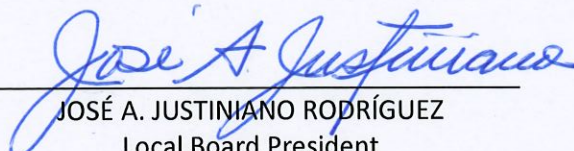
VI. OBLIGATION TO UPDATE DATA

The Executive Director will have the obligation to update statistical data included in this policy, since they respond to the information currently available in the "American Fact Finder" as of the date it is approved.



VII. APPROVAL AND VALIDITY

This policy shall be effective immediately upon approval. It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director to inform staff within five (5) days of its approval.



JOSÉ A. JUSTINIANO RODRÍGUEZ
Local Board President

DATE

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