

**Workforce Development System**  
**Technical Advisory #15-3**  
March 6, 2015

**To: Workforce Development Community**

**Subject: Self-Sufficiency Earnings Estimator**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Workforce Development System Technical Advisory (WDS-TA) is to re-acquaint the Career Center System with an updated, web-based career guidance tool: the Self-Sufficiency Earnings Estimator. The prior version of the estimator consisted of a series of data tables. The updated tool is online and leads a user through an intuitive question set to provide relevant self-sufficiency data. This resource can be found at:

[https://apps.labor.ny.gov/SEE\\_Project/xhtml/seeCalculator.faces](https://apps.labor.ny.gov/SEE_Project/xhtml/seeCalculator.faces).

**This technical Advisory rescinds and supersedes TA # 12-16 dated December 14, 2012.**

**Policy**

Career Center personnel who provide staff-assisted services should use this tool with job-seeking customers, as appropriate. This resource is an intuitive tool which can also be used by self-directed customers in Career Center resource rooms. The Self-Sufficiency Earnings Estimator should be communicated to the general public for use as an informational resource via the New York State Department of Labor website.

**Background**

It has been widely recognized that women are increasingly responsible for the economic security of their families despite the fact that more than a quarter of women-headed households in New York State live below the poverty level. Recognizing that workforce training programs have the potential to narrow the wage gap through training for, and referral to jobs with higher earning potential, New York State has enacted legislation amending the State's Labor law which now requires NYSDOL to:

- promote services that provide current information about compensation for jobs and careers that offer high earning potential, including jobs that traditionally hire predominately men; and
- provide labor market information regarding self-sufficiency rates for families living and working in local labor markets.

The NYSDOL Self-Sufficiency Earnings Estimator was developed to assist in implementing these requirements and it is a valuable resource for Career Center counselors, customers and the general

public. This tool should be used with both male and female customers to assist in making practical, yet informed, career choices which will provide self-sufficiency for their families.

The self-sufficiency incomes used in this estimator were derived from *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for New York State, 2010*; (June, 2010). In this study, self-sufficiency estimates were determined for 70 different family types by county in New York State using a number of variable costs, from housing to childcare. The self-sufficiency amounts have been adjusted for inflation using the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers and expanded to include a wider variety of family compositions.

### **Additional Information**

The Self-Sufficiency Earnings Estimator calculates the level of income required to meet essential needs for specific family compositions by county of residence. These needs include housing, food, health care, transportation, childcare and taxes. The estimated income does not include public or private assistance.

The calculator will display occupations that meet or exceed the estimated self-sufficiency income. It also shows the education requirements, on-the-job experience and job outlook for those occupations.

The calculator can help job-seeking customers:

- set educational and occupational goals;
- identify jobs which will provide self-sufficiency income for a customer's specific family composition and location;
- inform a customer's decision-making process when the customer is exploring possible career direction.

### **References**

Workforce Guidance and Information for Women Policy of August 13, 2012 (A9020-B).

[http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default\\_fld=&bn=A09020&term=2011&Summary=Y&Actions=Y&Text=Y&Votes=Y](http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&bn=A09020&term=2011&Summary=Y&Actions=Y&Text=Y&Votes=Y)

### **Inquiries**

Questions regarding this TA may be directed to: [WDTD.Onestop@labor.ny.gov](mailto:WDTD.Onestop@labor.ny.gov) .