

# Mass Workforce Issuance

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**Workforce Issuance No. 06-13**

Policy  Information

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**To:** Chief Elected Officials  
Workforce Investment Board Chairs  
Workforce Investment Board Directors  
Title I Administrators  
Career Center Directors  
Title I Fiscal Officers  
DCS Associate Directors  
DCS Field Managers

**cc:** WIA State Partners

**From:** Susan V. Lawler, Director  
Division of Career Services

**Date:** March 10, 2006

**Subject:** FY 2007 Annual Workforce Development Business Plan Narrative Questions and Local Labor Market Analysis Section

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**Purpose:** In order to accommodate a request from the field, the FY 2007 Annual Workforce Development Business Plan Narrative Questions and Local Labor Market Analysis Section are being posted in advance of the complete FY 2007 Annual Workforce Development Business Plan Guidance package so that local planners may initiate the development of their local plans.

**NOTE:** The complete Planning Guidance package will be posted on [massworkforce.org](http://massworkforce.org) on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Upon notification of the federal allotments to the Commonwealth, local funding allocations will subsequently be posted via a separate MassWorkforce Issuance.

**Policy:** Local area planners may begin developing responses to the FY 2007 Annual Workforce Development Business Plan Narrative Questions and Local Labor Market Analysis Section upon this posting.

**Action**

**Required:** Please assure that all appropriate staff are informed of the content of this issuance.

**Effective:** Immediately

**Inquiries:** Please email all questions to [PolicyQA@detma.org](mailto:PolicyQA@detma.org). Also, indicate Issuance number and description.

# **ANNUAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

## **BUSINESS PLAN**

### **PLANNING GUIDANCE**

**FISCAL YEAR 2007**

## **ANNUAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** **BUSINESS PLAN**

### **PART I. INTRODUCTION**

#### **Priorities for FY 2007**

Despite the uncertain horizon at the national level, the fundamental goal for federal, state and local partners will remain the same: to build a system of Workforce Boards and One-Stop Career Centers that respond quickly and effectively to changing economic conditions, demonstrated by the shifting needs of employers and workers.

This year, the Governor supported building the capacity of the workforce system to respond to the labor market in his FY 2007 budget request. Specifically, the Governor filed for new and additional funding in three major areas: flexible funding for the One-Stop Career Centers; training dollars for industry or business-driven training models to meet the needs of businesses and workers, and funding for at-risk, out-of school youth to create integrated work & learning models that lead to successful academic and employment outcomes. These three funding

priorities also align with the priority areas for the FY 2007 Local Annual Workforce Development Business Plans.

The state planning priorities for FY 2007 intentionally reflect the objectives of last year's planning instructions. Local areas should reflect on the challenges and progress made in developing their One-Stop Career Centers and various initiatives to strengthen the workforce development system in their region. The annual planning and modification process for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in FY 2007 should act as the strategic local planning process for the area led by the local Workforce Investment Board in partnership with the Chief Elected Official that includes all key regional partners (Workforce Boards, Chief Elected Officials, Title I Administrators, One-Stop Career Center Directors and other partners as desired) and spans WIA and non-WIA workforce development programs as appropriate. This year, changes were made to the integrated budget to better reflect the typical federal and state, WIA and non-WIA funding streams managed by local areas. A review of past local area integrated budgets generated the list of resources included in this year's integrated budget template.

Specifically, the FY07 state planning priorities will fall into four major categories similar to last year: 1) integrated service delivery for job seekers; 2) outreach and enhanced services for businesses; 3) enhanced and integrated service delivery for youth; and, 4) emphasis on local area program performance. Each of the planning priorities for FY 2007 is described in greater detail below. Local areas will be expected to describe and expand upon prior year strategies identified in these areas. *NOTE: The questions related to youth programming were refined and targeted to emphasize potential program design changes that will be required at the local level as a result of the pending WIA Youth Common Measures.*

## **1. Integration of Service Delivery for Job Seekers**

**Background:** The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) requires local service delivery areas to integrate core Adult WIA programs through One-Stop Career Centers. For the past several years, annual planning instructions have asked how additional programs potentially offered in a local area, such as TANF, employer-based training for incumbent workers, Workforce Training Fund programs, the Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative, BayStateWorks Initiatives, and Adult Basic Education, are integrated with and enhance the local system through the alignment of service delivery, data reporting, programmatic outcome requirements and evaluation.

Workforce Boards in partnership with Chief Elected Officials must play the lead role in setting policy and planning for services to meet the unique, regional needs of job seekers and workers as negotiated through the established charter with the One-Stop Career Center. The One-Stop Career Centers should serve as the focal point for the region's workforce development operations and service delivery system; this system should link with appropriate education or training providers in a coordinated and efficient fashion based upon the overall Business Plan for the region. Massachusetts has made great strides in overall service integration through One-Stop Career Centers. We do not have stand-alone Unemployment Walk-in centers and many OSCCs have Adult Education, TANF and MRC services or staff on-site. All OSCCs utilize a common data system to track customer demographics, eligibility, activities and outcomes across multiple

funding streams. Some local areas continue to implement continuous improvement processes for OSCCs, cross-training of staff, comprehensive chartering documentation, and cost-sharing financial models to charge against various grants. These examples demonstrate innovative steps toward tightly integrated services that maximize benefits for customers.

**Planning Actions Expected:** In responding to narrative questions each local business plan is expected to describe their job seeker strategies within the context of the specific roles and responsibilities of the local Workforce Board, Title I Administrator and One-Stop Career Center(s) within the framework of the regional infrastructure focusing on the reduction of duplication and streamlining of local governance and administrative structures wherever possible. In addition, the narrative questions will ask each area to build off of the prior year's strategies to integrate and enhance services for job seekers. Responses should articulate how each local entity supports the implementation of specific strategies for job seekers as appropriate to the entity's role. This response should also describe the area's strategies to expand and improve service integration with the One-Stop Career Center system to unique populations in the context of universal access, for example, cross-training of staff, issues around supervision and management of Career Center partner staff, regional strategies to serve special populations, common job descriptions for partner staff, financial cost-sharing practices, etc.

## 2. Outreach to Employers

**Background:** The ability of the workforce development system to engage and work with the employer community is critical to the success of the people receiving services as well as the overall economic success of the region and state. Employers are the ultimate consumer of workforce development services in their capacity to hire, train, retain and invest in the workforce. The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Division of Career Services (DCS) will continue to work with local areas to jointly develop policies and initiatives that increase employer engagement and use of the workforce development system. One major effort in building the system's capacity to serve business should focus on the ability of One-Stop Career Centers to respond to employers. The private sector members of Workforce Boards have a unique position to make recommendations on this goal. In addition to OSCC business services, statewide resources have been available in the last three years to work with consortia of employers to design integrated education and training activities through initiatives such as ECCLI, NUCLI, BayStateWorks, Workforce Training Fund, Hiring Incentive Training Grant etc. It is critical that the public workforce system, coordinated through the One-Stop Career Centers, engages business through these opportunities in order to improve the quality of response provided by the public workforce system. These business-driven training models are funding priorities at both the national and state levels.

**Planning Actions Expected:** The primary goals for FY 2007 will be to increase direct employer involvement with Workforce Boards and the Career Centers in order to develop more responsive employer customer service options and improve existing programs, especially by involving the participation of private sector members of local Workforce Investment Boards. Local areas will

be asked to identify strategies to serve employers in its FY 2007 Business Plan. Responses should also articulate how each local entity supports the implementation of specific strategies for employers and their workers as appropriate to the entity's role.

### 3. Enhancing Youth Services

**Background:** Local workforce investment boards and their youth councils need to consider several factors as they continue to implement enhancements to Title I Youth Services and develop a continuum of services for youth in the region.

- In 2004, USDOL issued TEGL No. 03-04, outlining a “New Strategic Vision for the Delivery of Youth Services under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)”. USDOL’s new vision seeks to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable youth; focus on improved program performance; addresses the labor market and business needs; and connect youth with alternative education. The strategic vision continues to be emphasized by several federal programs that support different youth services.
- Congress is still considering WIA reauthorization. Although any changes would not take effect during FY 2007, Workforce Investment Boards should be aware of the likely direction of statutory changes in youth service priorities, in the mix of youth service elements, and a shift to new performance measures. One major expected change in youth services is a higher priority for serving *out-of-school* youth. Some Workforce Investment Boards are already in the process of working with youth service vendors and changing priority youth populations to avoid having to make abrupt changes in the following year.
- New federal “Common Performance Measures” are already in place that require boards to begin reporting on three new program performance measures in addition to the seven required statutory measures. To provide stronger outcomes consistent with the new measures, boards and youth councils need to place a higher priority on specific youth outcomes such as placement in employment or education, attainment of a degree or skill certificate, and literacy or numeracy skill gains.
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts established *Pathways to Success by 21 (P-21)* as a multi-agency effort designed to create a better alignment of youth services and youth policy. The goal is to bring together partners from workforce development, human services, foster care, juvenile justice, welfare-to-work and transitional assistance, pregnant and parenting teens, housing and community development, and transportation to identify a unified strategy for serving youth in a region. The information learned through the P-21 process and through conversations with local partners on the demand for youth services in the local area should be reflected in the strategies identified for youth services in the annual FY 2007 Business Plan.
- The Massachusetts WIA Title I Youth program improved performance overall between FY 2004 and FY 2005, and the Commonwealth continues to emphasize improvements in

youth outcomes as a result of WIA investments. In the context of greater performance and improved data reporting, there needs to be continued strengthening of oversight systems by the LWIBs, and clear procedures to ensure timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of data reporting and entry – including readily identifiable source data in client files.

**Planning Actions Expected:** Workforce Investment Boards, Youth Councils, Title I Administrators and OSCCs will be expected to continue to engage their communities around the *P-21 Initiative* activities to implement their P21 Strategic Action Plan. Workforce Boards and Youth Councils should play a role in convening and informing community partners, including OSCCs, about local youth resources based upon prior years of “resource mapping” and strategic planning. The information learned through the P21 process and through conversations with local partners on the demand for youth services in the local area should be reflected in the strategies identified for WIA Title I youth services in the annual FY 2007 Business Plan.

In addition, Workforce Boards, Youth Councils, One-Stop Career Centers and community partners need to prepare for changes resulting from WIA re-authorization and the implementation of Youth Common Measures. Through the development of the annual Workforce Development Business Plan, regional partners should review youth programs currently supported by local areas to reposition their funding to support a shift in target population. In addition, local partners must put greater emphasis on the performance of programs for youth. Local areas that completed a Corrective Action Plan to address WIA Youth Measures should reference this information in the Business Plan.

#### **4. Performance and Accountability**

**Background:** Over the FY 2005 and FY 2006 planning cycles, greater emphasis was placed on performance and accountability for workforce development programs at the state level. State partners have been working with local areas on strategies to boost performance through one-on-one visits and various workshops. DCS developed quarterly reports and new “canned” crystal reports to review participant data to ensure stronger outcome information. These new tools and other strategies to connect program design and performance outcomes have been presented in FY 2006 through several statewide workshops on WIA and Wagner-Peyser performance, both youth and adult, jointly sponsored by DCS and CommCorp.

As discussed at several Workforce Partners’ Meetings and in the FY 2005 Annual Report to USDOL-ETA, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ FY 2005 WIA Title I statewide performance results were much improved over FY 2004. All performance goals were met or exceeded, and there was an increase in actual performance for 15 of 17 performance measures. Several local workforce investment areas qualified for incentive awards, compared to only one or two areas in the past few years. At the same time, several local areas continue to struggle with specific measures. The FY 2005 performance results for individual workforce investment areas were included in WIA Communication 05-77: FY 2005 WIA Title I Annual Performance issued on October 7, 2005. It is critical to review local area performance with all partners during the preparation of the FY 2007 Business Plan.

**Planning Actions Expected:** For the FY 2007 Workforce Development Business Plan, each area is expected to align regional WIA Title I performance standards with the state performance standards approved by USDOL/ETA for FY 2007. FY 2007 Business Plans should describe the process completed by regional partners -- Workforce Boards, Chief Elected Officials, WIA Title I Administrators and OSCCs -- to set regional performance standards for the year. The FY 2007 Business Plan instructions ask regional partners to identify local strategies employed to raise performance on weak measures *and* those to which strong performance on high-performing measures may be attributed. *NOTE: Question number three (3) on youth service strategies includes several sub-questions related to specific youth performance issues since these measures were difficult as a whole for the state.*

## **PART II. LOCAL LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS**

To ensure that services provided under the Workforce Investment Act address relevant labor force and employer needs, an analysis of local labor market conditions is a critical component of the annual planning process. An understanding of the economic trends and characteristics that shape the local labor market environment is essential to developing focused strategies and initiatives and to design an appropriate mix of employment and training services that will support efforts for continued economic development and growth.

Describe the specific local labor market conditions and characteristics that form the basis of your FY 2007 Workforce Development Business Plan. The analysis should include a clear description of each of the following elements:

- The current industry employment trends, with an emphasis on the identification of industries experiencing either major growth or decline.
- The projected industry and occupational employment opportunities for local job seekers.
- The job skills and training requirements necessary for employment in locally targeted industries and occupations.
- The demographic characteristics of the area's population base relevant to local workforce development issues including projected education/skill training needs.

The conditions and characteristics described in the Labor Market Analysis section of your local FY 2007 plan (PART II) should clearly inform and support the planned initiatives and service focus described in the responses to the questions in the Narrative section of the Plan (PART III)

The DCS Economic Analysis Office provides general labor market information for local areas in an on-line format. Instructions for accessing web-based labor market information were previously provided in WIA Communication Information Issuance No. 04-13 (February 25, 2004). For purposes of the FY 2007 planning process, additional local labor market information

(in hard copy form) that includes local data analysis will also be mailed to each Local Workforce Investment Board within the next several weeks. Labor market economists from the DCS Economic Analysis Office are able to assist with additional information and can be contacted at 617-626-5744.

Use of additional information sources, including business survey results, local advisory groups, specific economic development reports and any other source of relevant local labor market information is encouraged.

### **PART III. PLAN NARRATIVE**

All responses should reflect a detailed, planned approach that clearly indicates a full and efficient integration and coordination of partner services for the local area. Responses should address service delivery from a system-wide perspective that illustrates a coordinated planning process among all local partners and clearly reflects consistency with the state priorities described in the Introduction, above. Responses should also relate the broad spectrum of services to be provided locally with all appropriate Workforce Investment Board and One-Stop Career Center partner resources, not only DCS administered funding resources.

The response to each question below should clearly articulate how the local Workforce Investment Board will specifically support the initiatives/objectives that are described in all of the region's responses in the FY 2007 Local Workforce Development Annual Business Plan. This information regarding Board support will be utilized by the Department of Workforce Development in the review of the state funding for Local Workforce Investment Boards and Youth Councils through the Workforce Training Fund allocation of the state budget.

Each response should also clearly demonstrate a direct correlation to the area's current labor market characteristics [as described in the Labor Market Analysis section of the plan (PART II)], must also reflect how input from the local business community was utilized and accommodated in the development of each initiative and should describe how all partners collaborated to develop the responses.

The response to each of the following questions should be detailed to address all of the content areas and questions contained within.

- 1. Please describe the local area's overarching initiatives/objectives for providing services to job seekers for FY 2007?**
  - a. The response should focus on efforts to be primarily funded through the local area's general FY 2007 allocation, but should also describe the status/progress made on the jobseeker initiatives cited in the FY 2006 Plan and how the planned FY 2007 focus builds

on the prior year's efforts. The response should also demonstrate that efforts will respond not only to the needs of the general job seeker customer base, but to specifically targeted job seeker constituencies as well (UI claimants, Veterans, EAS participants, the Disabled, Youth, Offenders, etc.).

- b. The response should clearly explain the basis of the area's FY 2007 job seeker strategies/service design, the anticipated service and performance goals and the expected benefit to the local economy.
- c. The response should outline the specific, collaborative roles of the Board, the Title I Administrator and the area's Career Center(s) and the specific planned activities and/or strategies to support the FY 2007 job seeker initiatives/objectives.

**2. Please describe the local area's overarching initiatives/objectives for providing services to employers for FY 2007?**

- a. The response should describe the status/progress made on the employer initiatives cited in the FY 2006 Plan and how the planned FY 2007 focus builds on the prior year's efforts. Include a comprehensive description of how employer services are supported by various resources and staffing available in the region. The response should describe how the planned focus will apply not only to business customers in general, but to any sectors of the business community specifically targeted by the Local Workforce Board for special consideration based on their projected significance in promoting economic stability and development in the local area.
- b. The response should clearly explain the basis of the area's FY 2007 employer strategies/service design, the anticipated service and performance goals and the expected benefit to the local economy.
- c. The response should outline the specific, collaborative roles of the Board, the Title I Administrator and the area's Career Center(s) and the specific planned activities and/or strategies to support the FY 2007 employer initiatives/objectives.

**3 Please describe the local area's overarching initiatives/objectives for providing services to youth for FY 2007? Please include in the description new program connections, activities, or system reforms, if any, that will be implemented in your local area based on the federal new vision for youth services, the Massachusetts's Pathways to Success by 21 (P-21) planning initiative, or other youth efforts occurring in your region?**

The response should describe how youth-serving organizations and community-based organizations (WIA and non-WIA funded) are networked within the area's workforce development system as leveraged resources for outreach, support services and follow-up for youth program participants. Please reference Pathways to Success by 21 and other strategic planning actions that have supported this activity.

- a. For FY 2007 what are your area's primary priorities and strategies for managing and improving performance and access to the WIA Title I youth services?

The response should identify which segments of the Title I WIA eligible youth population have highest priority and the model(s) of service delivery that are required to address the unique needs of the priority population(s).

For local areas that have failed one of more performance measures in FY 2006, what steps will be taken to ensure continuation of performance improvement or corrective action plan (see Question 5.b, below)?

- b. For FY 2007 identify the specific actions your board will take to implement the Common Measures for youth.
  - 1) Do you anticipate changing the priority targeted population(s) – i.e., younger v. older youth, in-school v. out-of-school youth? Have these changes affected your process for selecting youth service providers, or in the mix of service elements that you need to deliver?
  - 2) What do you anticipate will be the major barriers/challenges to implementing common measures? What, if any, specific technical assistance will you require from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?
  - 3) What is your local strategy for ensuring that WIA youth programs will lead to postsecondary education, advanced training, or employment outcomes?
  - 4) Based on your local labor market needs, what specific occupational or technical skill credentials will your youth program emphasize? How are you working with your youth service providers to ensure that their training or services are aligned with these skill credentials?
  - 5) Regarding the Literacy and Numeracy measure, which of the approved National Reporting System assessment instruments will be used to conduct pre-tests and post-tests for out-of-school youth who are basic skill deficient? How are you working with your framework service provider to ensure the appropriate assessment, development of an ISS, and referral to a WIA youth service provider? How are you working with your youth service providers to ensure the provision of appropriate services that will yield a greater likelihood of a positive skill gain?
  - 6) How is your board working with the framework service provider and with youth service providers to ensure the timely transmission of data regarding youth services to determine exit dates, service delivery, outcomes, and the timing of follow-up services?
  - 7) Have you revised your existing youth contracts or youth RFP(s) to reflect the new common performance measures, emphasize the need to focus on the three new performance outcomes, and ensure that youth service providers are reporting timely management and performance information?

**4. Please describe how the local area will allocate training funds and resources in FY 2007 to assure skill enhancement across the broadest adult and dislocated worker customer base?**

- a. The response should describe how the local plan for customer training ensures an appropriate and equitable allocation of the area's total available resources in relation to the allocation of resources for other One-Stop Career Center services and operational cost categories versus training funds.
- b. The response should clearly describe how the local One-Stop Career Center(s) will ensure a timely response to customers (job seekers and employers) training needs.
- c. The response should also clearly demonstrate that policies of the Board and procedures of the Title I Administrator, the Fiscal Agent (if a separate entity) and the Career Center partners support a training decision-making process that incorporates assessment of an individual customer's future employment interests and labor market demand. Please refer to decisions to prioritize funding for certain populations, spending caps, etc.

**5. What specific continuous improvement initiatives are planned by all local partners in FY07 to strengthen the operation of the One-Stop Career Center(s)?**

- a. The response should describe specific quality/process improvement projects planned by the local partners to promote improvement in local service delivery for FY 2007 and should include a discussion of gains realized from the prior year's improvement initiatives and how the FY 2006 plans build on those outcomes. The response should also clearly describe how the planned quality/process improvement initiatives are supported by the Board, Title I Administrator and the local Career Center partners.
- b. The response should specifically highlight locally generated continuous improvement plans to be implemented to assure attainment of *all* FY 2007 performance goals and should include a description of the anticipated outcomes and benefits to customers. If any of the 17 local performance goals were not met in FY 2005 please describe the specific activities undertaken in FY 2006 and those planned for FY 2007 to assure improvement of performance on the goals not met in FY 2005. *NOTE: for performance issues on youth measures, you may reference any detailed responses in the previous information contained in Question 3.*