



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF CAREER SERVICES

MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
LT. GOVERNOR

JANE C. EDMONDS
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SUSAN V. LAWLER
DIRECTOR

June 1, 2006

«Provider»
«Address»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear «Attn»,

Please permit me to express my appreciation for your contribution to the Commonwealth's workforce development community in building and maintaining a skilled workforce. Education and training providers are a critical element in job seekers connecting to a successful future in the Massachusetts labor force.

As an approved Massachusetts training provider, you are aware that the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) provides funds to support the training costs for persons needing to upgrade their occupational skills. Training is primarily available through programs such as yours that have been pre-approved for an individual training account (ITA) and are directly purchased by our One-Stop Career Centers on behalf of their customers. As with any federally-funded program, the Commonwealth is required to report to USDOL with regard to job seekers served and the services provided, including training courses purchased and course results. In order to improve the usefulness of the collected data, USDOL has implemented several new state reporting requirements, including clarification of the basis of any "Certificates" awarded to training participants.

As a vendor of currently approved ITA courses, I respectfully request your assistance in clarifying existing course results in accordance with the new reporting requirements. **Please follow the enclosed instructions and return the completed *Certificate Course Review List* by June 23, 2006.**

If you have questions or need further information you may contact Carla Erb at 617-626-5687. We are also willing, depending on demand, to provide a question and answer/technical assistance session for vendors on Friday June 16, 2006. If you are interested in attending such a session please email your interest to Carla Erb at cerb@detma.org by Friday, June 9.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan V. Lawler".

Susan V. Lawler, Director
Division of Career Services
Department of Workforce Development

INSTRUCTIONS

Not all courses approved for ITA purchases must have a course result, but for those that do have a course result of *Certificate*, USDOL has instructed states to use a new, standard definition of *Certificate*.

Please review the enclosed *Certificate Course Review List* and indicate by checkmark whether or not the course results in a certificate as defined below. If the course does result in a certificate, please use the corresponding letter code (A-H) to indicate the appropriate basis for the award of the certificate. If the certificate is awarded by an entity as indicated under letter C, please provide the **name of the certifying organization; contact person; email address; telephone number or mailing address**.

If a course on the Review List is returned without a checkmark the result will be recorded as 'does not result in a certificate'. Please sign and return the completed form no later than June 23, 2006.

CERTIFICATE DEFINITION

The following definition is excerpted from the USDOL-ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter TEGL 17-05, Attachment B available at http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2195.

Certificate - A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation. These technical or occupational skills are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers. Certificates awarded by workforce investment boards are not included in this definition. Work readiness certificates are also not included in this definition. A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of technical or occupational skills by:

- A. A state educational agency or a state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a state.
- B. An institution of higher education described in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act (20 USC 1002) that is qualified to participate in the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of that Act. This includes community colleges, proprietary schools, and all other institutions of higher education that are eligible to participate in Federal student financial aid programs.
- C. A professional, industry, or employer organization (e.g., National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence certification, National Institute for Metalworking Skills, Inc., Machining Level 1 credential) or a product manufacturer or developer (e.g., Microsoft Certified Database Administrator, Certified Novell Engineer, Sun Certified Java Programmer) using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- D. A registered apprenticeship program.
- E. A public regulatory agency, upon an individual's fulfillment of educational, work experience, or skill requirements that are legally necessary for an individual to use an occupational or professional title or to practice an occupation or profession (e.g., FAA aviation mechanic certification, state certified asbestos inspector).
- F. A program that has been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer education and training to veterans and other eligible persons;
- G. Job Corps centers that issue certificate.
- H. Institutions of higher education which is formally controlled, or has been formally sanctioned, or chartered, by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q1. If a course offered by my organization does not result in a certificate will Career Centers still be able to approve the course for Title I funded individual training accounts (ITAs)?

Answer: Yes. Approved ITA courses may or may not result in the award of a certificate, but may, nonetheless, be appropriate for Career Center customers who need the course to improve their employment prospects.

It is the Department of Labor's intent at this time to clarify the definition of course results, not to change the type of training courses that Career Centers may provide to customers.

Q2. Does the information I provide to the Massachusetts Division of Career Services supersede the local workforce investment boards' responsibility to provide local approval of ITA courses?

Answer: No. The information you provide will be used to verify and, where necessary, to update the course results already on record in the workforce investment boards' database of approved ITA training providers for FY2006. Subsequently, local workforce investment boards will be asked to update ITA approvals for FY2007 courses. The process for updating ITA approvals occurs at the beginning of each fiscal year and should be virtually the same in FY2007 as it has been in past years.

Q3. Is it possible that changes in the Department of Labor's definition of certificate will have an impact on the courses that local workforce investment boards are willing to approve for ITAs?

Answer: There is no federal or state mandate for (or against) local workforce investment boards to adjust their decision making process based on the change in the definition of certificate. Information that is equally likely to affect a board's ITA approval process includes:

- labor market demand for trainees;
- average earnings within an industry or occupation for trainees;
- age, education and work experience of trainees;
- pricing and scheduling of courses;
- accessibility of vendor's courses to the disabled;
- percent of vendor's trainees that enter employment;
- average earnings of vendor's trainees;
- percent of vendor's trainees that retain employment;
- percent of vendor's trainees that complete courses/earn a certificate;
- the level of state or federal funds available for individual training accounts;
- other considerations made by local workforce board.

Q4. Will the change in definition of certificate have an impact on students who are already enrolled in ITA approved courses?

Answer: Participants that are enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act Title I program prior to July 1, 2006 will not be subject to the new definition of certificate. This includes

- Title I participants who are already enrolled in training; and
- Title I participants who are not enrolled in training but become enrolled at *any* future date.