

# Mass Workforce Issuance

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**Workforce Issuance No. 06-46**

**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:** July 31, 2006

**Subject:** Rapid Response Process - Revised

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**Purpose:** To transmit to Local Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce development partners a revised policy with regard to the development of a local Rapid Response plan to plant closing and/or mass layoff activity.

**Background:** Rapid Response (RR) is a Layoff Aversion / Outplacement program designed to respond to major layoffs and plant closings by rapidly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to affected companies and their workers. The success of any effort to avoid potential closings or layoffs is dependent on how quickly and smoothly the state and local workforce investment partners can develop and implement an appropriate service strategy.

In an effort to improve coordination of the planning process at the local level, the procedures for developing a local plan of action have been revised. The policy described below, implements procedural changes that are intended to enhance the seamless delivery of high quality services to employer customers and, if necessary, their affected workers. The procedures specifically strengthen the coordination between the Division of Career Services (DCS) Rapid Response team members and the local Workforce Investment System practitioners.

**Policy:** In order to assure effective coordination in responding to a plant closing and/or mass layoff, each local workforce investment area will establish a standing **Rapid Response Planning Team for each One-Stop Career Center in its area.**

Each local Rapid Response Planning Team will consist of:

- the Workforce Investment Board Executive Director,
- the Title I Administrator,
- the One-Stop Career Center Director,
- the local Rapid Response Coordinator,
- the DCS Field Manager, and
- the designated Business Services Representative

A chart indicating the designated personnel for each area's Rapid Response Planning Team(s) is included as Attachment A.

To assure that decisions regarding the provision of rapid response services for specific closing/layoff events will be made in a timely manner, each member (described above) shall identify an "alternate" who will be empowered to make all necessary decisions regarding services, staffing and other resource allocation in the absence of the designated team member. The "alternate" will attend and participate in local Planning Team meetings based solely on the unavailability of the designated team member. The alternate shall not be considered a "substitute" team member.

In responding to plant closing/mass layoff information, the following Rapid Response process will be adhered to by all Massachusetts Workforce Investment Area partners.

## **MASSACHUSETTS RAPID RESPONSE PROCESS**

### **Step 1: Plant Closing / Layoff Notification**

- Rapid Response activities are generally initiated upon receipt of information regarding a plant closing or a significant layoff. Such information may come from a number of sources such as, but not limited to: MA Department of Workforce Development (DWD), DWD/Division of Career Services (DCS), One Stop Career Centers (OSCCs), Organized Labor, the DCS Rapid Response (RR) Team or through a formal WARN notification submitted by the company, itself.

If the information is not received directly by the Rapid Response team the **Rapid Response Manager and/or local Rapid Response Coordinator *must be notified immediately of any plant closing or layoff.***

## **Step 2: Call to Company**

- Upon receipt of notification, it will be the responsibility of the Rapid Response Manager or designated Rapid Response Coordinator to:
  - make the initial contact to the identified company to verify the information regarding a layoff/closing,
  - determine labor union involvement,
  - introduce the company to potential services, and
  - request the scheduling of an initial on-site company meeting.

## **Step 3: Initial On-site Company Meeting**

- The Rapid Response Manager and/or Rapid Response coordinator will attend the initial on-site company meeting.
- The Rapid Response Manager/Coordinator will provide the company with general information regarding the potential services available to the company and its workers through the local MA Workforce Investment/One-Stop Career Center system. The presentation will also include information with respect to lay off aversion strategies, matching affected workers to area employers who are hiring, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), National Emergency Grants, Rapid Response Set-Aside Grants and the ability to provide on-site services.
- The Rapid Response Manager/Coordinator will coordinate completion of the Company Questionnaire/Demographic Report (Attachment B) that includes a confidentiality waiver.
- The local Rapid Response Coordinator will enter all available company information, the employer services rendered and the workforce demographics into MOSES.

## **Step 4: Scheduling Local RR Planning Meeting**

- The Rapid Response Manager and/or Rapid Response Coordinator will coordinate with the designated Point Person (see below) to schedule (via email) a local Rapid Response Planning Team meeting within 24 hours of the initial on-site company meeting. If the service plan will include multiple areas then a joint meeting of local Planning Teams will be scheduled.
- If the company layoff is considered minor, (local workforce investment areas will, as part of this revised process, establish its own policy with respect to defining a “minor” layoff that will be applied to closing/layoff activity within its area) the Planning Team Point person, in conjunction with the Rapid Response Manager/Coordinator, will determine whether or not a Planning Team meeting is necessary, and will email notification of the decision to the other each team members.

## Step 5: Local RR Planning Meeting

- Following the Rapid Response Manager's/Coordinator's initial meeting with the company, the appropriate local Rapid Response Planning Team will be convened by the designated Point Person to develop the formal service delivery plan for the affected company.  
The team will determine:
  - Where services will be provided: on-site at company and/or off-site at a designated One-Stop Career Center.
  - The availability of staff and resources for on-site company sessions.
  - The time frame of the service delivery plan
  - The potential mix of available services that may include, but is not limited to:
    - ✓ Career Center Seminar (Mandatory)
    - ✓ Unemployment Insurance Orientation (Mandatory)
    - ✓ Creation of a Job Development Plan including company matching
    - ✓ Skills assessment
    - ✓ Counseling
    - ✓ Workshops
    - ✓ Training services
    - ✓ Trade Program orientation sessions (if necessary)
    - ✓ Job Fairs
  - The materials needed for on-site company services.
  - An outreach strategy which should include contacting RR referrals within two weeks of lay-off notification.
- The local Rapid Response Planning Team will also be responsible for determining if the local allocation of formula Title I funding is sufficient to meet the needs of the company/workers or, if it is not that it is necessary to submit a formal request for NEG and/or Rapid Response Set-Aside funding in order to meet company/worker needs and carry out the service plan.

**NOTE:** Technical Assistance sessions will be scheduled for identified Planning Team members. Notification of the schedule will be made under separate cover.

### **Action Required:**

Each local area *must* implement procedures consistent with the policy expressed herein. In accordance with the policy, each local area must designate a "Contact Point Person" and an "Alternate Point Person" for its Rapid Response Planning Team. The "Point Person" (or in his/her absence, the "Alternate Point Person") will be the official point of contact between the local services delivery system and the DCS Rapid Response Manager and/or Coordinator with respect to all local Rapid Response activities in the local area. The "Point Person" and "Alternate Point Person" may be any member of the Rapid Response Planning Team with the exception of the DCS Rapid Response Coordinator.

Additionally, each team member must identify an "alternate" who will be, in the designated team member's absence, empowered to make decisions with respect to

services, staffing and other resources in conjunction to initiating rapid response services related to specific closing/layoff events.

**All members of the Rapid Response Planning Team (as well as their identified alternates) must be in compliance with all information confidentiality requirements as expressed in WIA Communication No. 05-76 Policy to Protect Confidential Information including submission of a signed *Confidentiality Agreement Form*.**

The names of the designated “Point Person” and the team’s “Alternate Point Person” as well as the names of each team member’s “alternate” must be submitted to the DCS Rapid Response Manager no later than Friday, August 11, 2006. The names may be submitted electronically to Ken Messina at [kmessina@detma.org](mailto:kmessina@detma.org) .

If in some areas, it is deemed more appropriate to designate a career center manager instead of the One-Stop Career Center Director as a member of the Planning Team please submit the appropriate manager’s name.

Each local area must determine the local parameters as to what will be considered a “minor” layoff for its area. The definition must be submitted to the DCS Rapid Response Manager no later September 30, 2006.

**Effective:** Immediately

**References:** WIA Communication No. 05-76 Policy to Protect Confidential Information (10/19/2006)

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