

# Mass Workforce Issuance

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**Workforce Issuance No. 14-80**

**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 Operations Managers

**cc:** WIA State Partners

**From:** Alice Sweeney, Director  
Department of Career Services

**Date:** October 10, 2014

**Subject:** **Job Driven National Emergency Grant Project**

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**Purpose:** To notify Local Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce investment partners of guidance with respect to the Job Driven National Emergency Grant (JD NEG).

**Background:** The Job-Driven National Emergency Grant (JD NEG) CFDA #17.277, recently awarded \$4,334,766 to Massachusetts, performance period from July 1, 2014 through September 30, 2016, offers the opportunity to expand current and pilot new models of training through innovative project design. This promising project focuses on “**Work-Based Training**” (WBT) models where hands-on experience in a work environment is integrated with classroom learning and will ensure local career centers provide comprehensive employment and training services to eligible Dislocated Workers. This program will provide intensive and training services to the aforementioned Dislocated Workers with the ultimate goal of placement in unsubsidized employment.

The Primary Operator for the JD NEG Project is the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc. Each of the remaining Massachusetts Workforce Investment Areas may participate in the JD NEG Project through a statewide voucher process administered by the designated project operator.

Training services for eligible participants are available through the following models:

**Work-Based Training (WBT) Models:**

1. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP - Creation or expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs and pre-apprenticeship programs with a pipeline to Registered Apprenticeship.
2. ON-THE-JOB TRAINING - Creation or expansion of on-the-job training (OJT) programs.
3. INNOVATIVE WORK BASED TRAINING (WBT)
  - a. Creation or expansion of customized training programs in partnership with an employer or multiple employers from a similar industry sector (not incumbent worker training).
  - b. Expansion of existing career pathways programs that align adult education, career and technical education, occupational skills training, soft skills and supportive services.
  - c. Expansion of accelerated learning models, such as contextualized learning models that combine career content with basic skills development, leading to faster course completion and matriculation into employment and/or higher level training.

**Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Model:**

- Key industries: Education and Health Services; Financial Activities; Other Services and Manufacturing; and Professional and Business Services

Apprenticeship programs and OJT opportunities allow workers to earn while learning job-relevant skills and to advance their careers. One of the goals of the JD NEG is to increase utilization of OJT and Apprenticeships in Massachusetts.

Local area staff who are well-prepared to engage employers in WBT models, such as OJT and Apprenticeships, are vital to regional success in improving the efficiency and effectiveness with which employers can fill job openings and meet their overall hiring needs.

**Policy:**

The Commonwealth's JD NEG Project will be implemented for the period from July 1, 2014 through September 30, 2016. Grant funds will be accessible to all sixteen Massachusetts Workforce Investment Areas. Under the JD NEG Project, eligible dislocated workers may receive needed occupational skill training, On-the-Job Training, Apprenticeship training or Innovative Work Based Training.

To be eligible to participate in the JD NEG Project the training participants' must meet the WIA Title I eligibility requirements as a dislocated worker. Targeted populations include:

- a) Veterans Priority (Dislocated Worker definition applies)
- b) Long-Term Unemployed Dislocated Workers – (Unemployed for at least 27 weeks in aggregate since January 1, 2008) - target: 60% of total

- participants
- c) Profiled as likely to exhaust UI benefits (REA participants) – target: 10% of total participants
  - d) Foreign-trained immigrant workers, who qualify as dislocated workers, and have faced barriers to obtaining employment in their trained field or profession – no target
  - e) Other Dislocated Workers – maximum 30% of participants

All employers participating in the JD NEG Project must meet the eligibility requirements as per MassWorkforce Issuance No. 11-28.

For the purposes of this project, ETA has established a wage cap requirement that the training reimbursement level is not to exceed a percentage (based on the sliding scale in MassWorkforce Issuance No. 11-28) of the states' average wage rate. The current Massachusetts average wage level as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics is \$26.32. While the JD NEG Project contracts may be written with employers who pay participants more than the Commonwealth's average wage, the employer cannot receive a training reimbursement in excess of the relevant percentage (based on number of employees) as applied to the capped level.

Areas are to have a local OJT policy in place. If the local policy states an OJT cap, but the local area wishes to utilize broader reimbursement under the JD NEG, the local policy must state the exception.

The Commonwealth's JD NEG Project will include the following elements:

**Master Agreement:**

Each local area fiscal agent will enter into a Master Agreement (based on the Commonwealth's vouchering model) with the Primary Operator for reimbursement for costs associated with developing JD NEG training opportunities in the local area and providing related intensive employment services, including case management to dislocated workers participating in the JD NEG Project.

**Single Point of Contact Designation:**

Each local area will designate up to two single point(s) of contact (SPoC) responsible for each of the training models available through the JD NEG. In accordance with the Master Agreement, the SPoC(s) will coordinate all activities undertaken in conjunction with this grant as outlined in Attachment A.

**Training Slot and Voucher Allotment:**

Contracts for all training models will be executed by the Primary Operator with the Employer or Training Provider. The local area will receive a \$3,300 NEG voucher per authorized enrollee for NEG funded training. Availability of training slots and vouchers is as follows:

On-the Job Training (OJT) contracts

- Awarded on First come first served basis pending funding availability

#### Traditional ITA contracts

- Regions earn one ITA slot for each OJT Contract executed pending funding availability

#### Innovative Work Based Training (WBT)

- Regions are asked to submit an application outlining potential models for delivering Work Based Training meeting the definition in Other Work Based Training above. These applications will be reviewed by a designated panel and bundled training slots and vouchers will be awarded for approved submissions.
- See attachment L - Mini Application for Innovative Work Based Training
- Applications will be on a rolling submission and accepted through October 31, 2014. As funding permits, an additional round of applications may be available in January 2015.

#### Apprenticeship slots

- Regions are asked to articulate innovative concepts to incorporate Apprenticeship delivery in their local areas. The Primary Operator, DCS and the Division of Apprentice Standards will work with local areas to develop and implement new apprentice programs in conjunction with the JD NEG.

For specific administrative and operational guidance, please refer to Attachment A, "Job Driven NEG Project Administrative and Operational Guidance."

#### **Action**

**Required:** Please assure that all individuals in your workforce investment area are notified of this policy and take necessary steps to ensure compliance with its content.

**Effective:** Immediately

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

**References:** WIA Regulations at 20 CFR Parts 663.700 through 663.720  
 11-28 On-the-Job Training (OJT)  
 11-30 On-the-Job Training Under the TAA  
 14-37 New NEG Funding Opportunity (JD NEG)  
 DOL [TEN No. 29-13](#), April 28, 2014  
 04-34 Case Management for Job Seeker Customers  
 11-54 Interim Employment and Eligibility for Intensive and Training Services  
 13-17 and [TEGL 16-12](#) OJT and NEG Wage Cap Data  
 13-43 WIA Waivers Approved Through 2017

14-52 Subsequent Eligibility for ITA Training Provider Courses  
12-67 Implementing Veterans' Priority of Service  
03-29 DET Principles for National Emergency Grants (NEGs)

**Attachments:** A: Job Driven NEG Project Administrative and Operational Guidance  
B: Sample Employer Eligibility Checklist  
C: Sample OJT Pre Contract and Skill Gap Form  
D: Sample OJT Contract  
E: Sample ITA & OJT Justification Form  
F: Sample Employer Invoice Monthly  
G: Sample OJT Monthly Progress Report  
H: Sample OJT Local Monitoring Report  
I: Sample Local Area Voucher Invoice  
J: Sample Individual Training Account Request Form  
K: Sample Training Plan Template  
L: Mini-Application for Innovative Work Based Training  
M: Signatory Authorization