



Workforce Issuance

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☐ Policy ☒ Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
MassHire Workforce Board Chairs
MassHire Workforce Board Directors
MassHire Career Center Directors
MassHire Fiscal Officers
MassHire DCS Operations Managers

cc: WIOA State Partners

From: Alice Sweeney, Director
MassHire Department of Career Services

Date: July 13, 2021

Subject: **Workforce Training Fund Program Changes – Increasing Express Program Subsidy for Small Businesses**

Purpose: To notify MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Center Operators, and other workforce development partners of changes regarding the Express Program, Workforce Training Fund Program.

Background: The Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP) awards approximately \$20MM annually to Massachusetts businesses to fund training for new and recently hired employees. WTFP is administered by Commonwealth Corporation.

Small businesses, particularly minority-owned enterprises and women-owned enterprises have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, the Workforce Training Fund has made a strategic shift focused on

An equal opportunity employer/program.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

TDD/TTY 1-800-439-2370 - Voice 1-800-439-0183

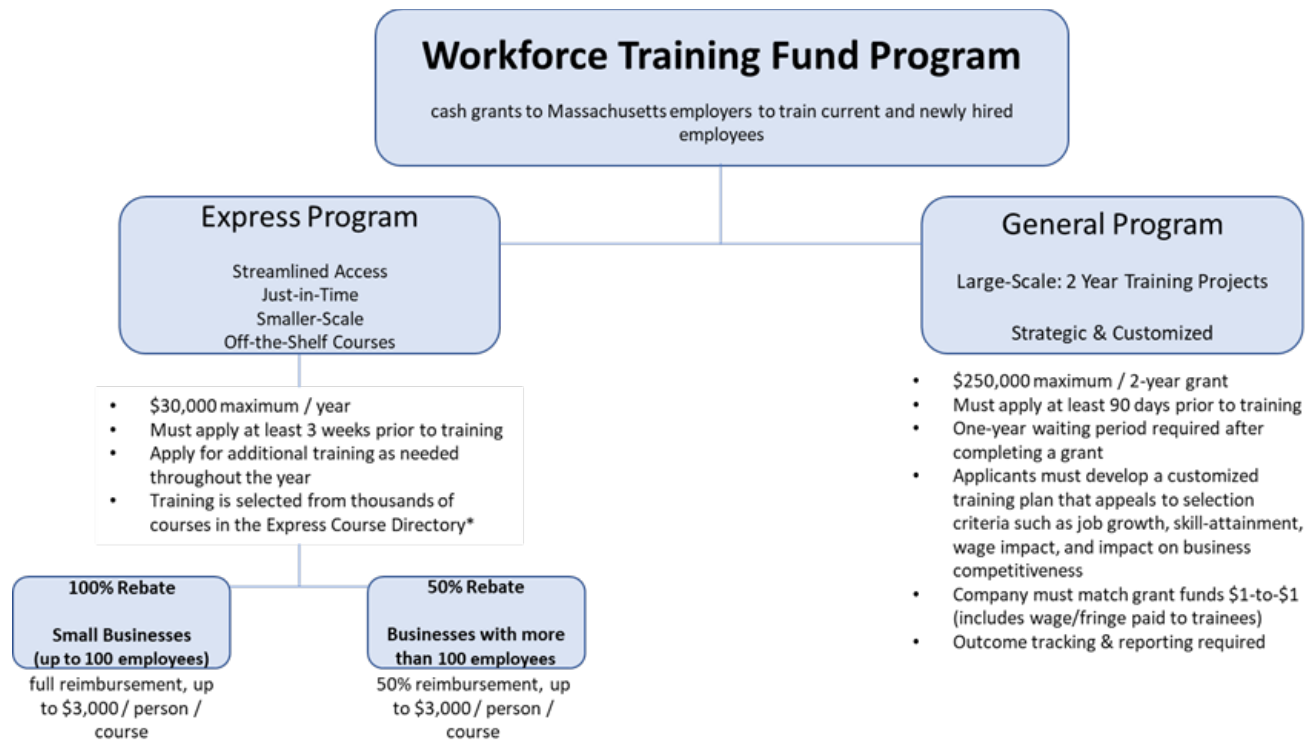
increasing access to training for incumbent workers of small businesses. Previously, small businesses could access a limited selection of fully-subsidized, off-the-shelf training via the Small Business Direct Access Program or access a larger selection of partially subsidized, off-the-shelf training via the Express Program. Express grant subsidies for small businesses were previously limited to 50% of the total cost of training, up to \$3,000 / person / course; up to \$30,000 per company annually.

Beginning on July 1, 2021, all off-the-shelf training is available via a single pathway, the Express Program. Additionally, as of July 1, 2021, businesses with 100 or fewer employees are eligible for Express Program grants that cover the full cost of training, up to \$3,000 per person per course. Companies are limited to \$30,000 in new grants per calendar year. Consequently, the Small Businesses Direct Access Program will not continue past the current round which ended on June 30, 2021.

Please Note:

- WTFP's General Program training grants of up to \$250,000 for two-year, customized training remain available to any size businesses.
- Businesses with over 100 employees in MA remain eligible for Express Program grants to cover 50% of the total cost of training, up to \$3,000 per person / course. Companies are limited to \$30,000 in new Express Program grants per calendar year.

The diagram below summarizes the full scope of available grants from the Workforce Training Fund Program as of July 1, 2021:



Using a Human-Centered Design approach, and the input of nearly 200 businesses, Commonwealth Corporation has also implemented a new and improved website, additional customer supports, and a refined application processes to improve User Experience (UX) for small businesses.

Guidance incorporating these changes is now available at: WorkforceTrainingFund.org/express.

Action

Requested: Please share this issuance with all appropriate managers, staff and partners.

Effective: Immediately.

Inquiries: Please refer questions to Express@commcorp.org.