



MASSACHUSETTS
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
JOINT PARTNER COMMUNICATION

WIOA Joint Partner Communication 01.2025.1

Policy **Information**

To: MassHire Workforce Board Chairs
MassHire Workforce Board Directors
MassHire Career Center Directors
MassHire Fiscal Officers
MDCS Operations Managers
Adult Education Providers
MassAbility Offices and Providers
Massachusetts Commission for the Blind Offices and Providers
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Providers
Department of Transitional Assistance Offices and
Providers of SNAP and TANF Services

From: Alysia Ordway, Undersecretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of
Labor and Workforce Development
Beth Goguen, Director, MassHire Department of Career Services
Katie Dishnica, Director, Department of Unemployment Assistance
Toni Wolf, Commissioner, MassAbility
John Oliveira, Commissioner, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
Wyvonne Stevens-Carter, State Adult Education Director, Dept of Elementary and
Secondary Ed, Adult and Community Learning Services
Jeffery McCue, Commissioner, Department of Transitional Assistance

Date: May 15, 2026

Subject: **MassAbility and MassHire Training Partnership**

Purpose: To notify MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators, and other workforce partners of funds available to MassAbility participants through the MassAbility and MassHire Training Partnership.

Policy revisions include:

- **MassAbility Waiver Authority:** Added language clarifying that MassAbility retains discretion to approve waivers to cover training costs that exceed the \$7,500 cap.
- **Waiver Documentation:** An email from MassAbility confirming that approval of the waiver must be included in the participant’s enrollment package.
- **Leveraging WIOA Funds:** Language to clarify that WIOA funds may be leveraged, where appropriate, to support training costs in alignment with program requirements and funding availability.
- **Concurrent Program Participation:** Clarifies that participants may be receiving services through other programs; however, concurrent participation should not delay enrollment in the MassAbility/MassHire Training Partnership.
- **Enrollment Packet Submission Timeline:** MassHire staff must submit the completed enrollment packet to Steve Trueman at the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board within 10 business to support timely training enrollment.

Background: MassAbility committed funding during FY2026 to support workforce training for MassAbility participants. MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) and MassAbility continue to partner to assist training-ready MassAbility participants to enroll in workforce training toward increased employment opportunities. Funds provided by MassAbility for training are supplemental to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training funds.

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHCWB) continues to administer the funding for Individual Training Accounts (ITA), and for “voucher payments” to MassHire Career Centers. Funds may also be utilized for On-the-Job Training (OJT), as appropriate to the individual circumstance and as approved by MassAbility in conjunction with MHCWB.

Policy: Availability of MassAbility training funds is effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026; these funds are accessible to the sixteen local workforce areas. Contracts for the ITAs are executed between the MHCWB and the individual training providers selected by the MassAbility participant.

Funds are distributed on a first come first-served basis and must be **fully expended by June 30, 2026.**

Shared Customers

All MassAbility participants referred to the MassHire Career Center system are required to complete a career center registration. Career center registration allows MassAbility participants access to basic services including labor exchange services, information on programs and services, and referrals. Shared Customers are those identified as being enrolled in another WIOA partner program. MassAbility participants who enroll in the MassAbility/MassHire Training Partnership are considered Shared Customers.

Staff must check off the “MassAbility” (shown as Mass Rehab) button on the MOSES Basic Screen to indicate the participant is a Shared Customer.

The screenshot shows the 'Job Seeker Membership' software interface. The 'Programs' section is highlighted with a red box. The table below shows the programs available for selection:

Program Name	Apply	Program Status	History
Mass Rehab	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Dropdown]	[Icon]
MCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Dropdown]	[Icon]
Rapid Response	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Dropdown]	[Icon]

The 'Last Reportable Service Date' is 04/23/2019. The 'Mass Rehab' program is selected, and the 'Apply' checkbox is checked. The 'Program Status' and 'History' columns are also visible.

MassAbility Training Cap

Although MassAbility training funds are subject to a \$7,500 cap on training cost, **training costs that exceed this amount may be considered for a waiver** or comparable benefits may be identified to cover the costs that exceed the training cap. MassAbility has discretion for implementation of waivers to cover training costs beyond the \$7,500 cap. MassAbility staff seeking approval for

training costs exceeding the \$7,5000 cap must submit a waiver request through their respective Area Director for review and consideration. Emails from MassAbility, confirming approved waivers should be included with the MassHire training enrollment package and forwarded to Steve Trueman at Hampden County for reconciliation and tracking purposes.

Leveraging WIOA Funds

Multiple funding sources may be combined, or braided, to cover the cost of training to eligible participants. WIOA and MassAbility/MassHire Training Partnership Funds may be combined to cover training costs. In these instances, participants will be required to participate in regular WIOA eligibility and enrollment activities as per local policy.

Co-enrollment in WIOA Title I

Co-enrollment of the MassAbility participant with WIOA Title I, as appropriate, is strongly encouraged. MassAbility participants enrolled in WIOA Title I are shared customers who will receive access to individualized career services including but not limited to:

- Specialized Assessments
- Development of Individual Employment Plan
- Individualized Counseling
- Career Planning

MassAbility participants must meet eligibility requirements to participate in WIOA Title I, including Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs.

WIOA Title I Eligibility for Individualized Career Services

To be eligible to receive individualized career services, MassAbility participants must meet the following WIOA Title I Eligibility requirements. Priority for individualized services must also be applied.

Title I Eligibility:

- 18 years of age or older.
- Citizen or national of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident alien, refugee, asylee, parolee, or other immigrant authorized by the Attorney General to work in the United States.
- In compliance with the Military Selective Service Act. (WIOA Sec. 189(h)). (This applies to males 18 or older who were born on or after January 1, 1960).

Priority of Service:

(WIOA Sec. 134(c) (3) (E)) —Priority for individualized career services (ref. § 678.430(b)) and training services funded with Title I Adult funds must be given to individuals included in the following groups. However, individuals who do not fall into the priority categories may also be served in accordance with local standard operating procedures.

- **Covered persons** (Veterans and eligible spouses)
- **Public assistance** (TAFDC, EAEDC, SNAP, SSI, Chapter 115 benefits)
- **Other low income** (in accordance with Federal Poverty Guidelines and Lower Living Level Standard Income Levels)
- **Basic skills deficient** - English, writing, or computation skills at or below 8.9 grade level or are English Language Learners or an individual that meets one of the following criteria:
 - Lack a high school diploma or high school equivalent and is not enrolled in secondary education.
 - Enrolled in a Title II Adult Education/Literacy program
 - Lack basic computer literacy or basic financial literacy skills.

Eligibility for MassAbility-Funded Training

To be eligible for training, MassAbility participants must have an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) developed by MassAbility. The IPE includes results of career assessments and will be provided to the MassHire Career Center (MCC) Single Point of Contact upon referral. The IPE will be used in place of the MCC individual employment plan that would otherwise be developed during individualized career services. MassAbility participants referred to training will be eligible for MassAbility-funded ITAs.

Please note that eligibility for MassAbility training funds is not contingent upon eligibility for the WIOA Title I Program. MassAbility training funds are not subject to WIOA Title I program requirements.

Additionally, a participant may receive concurrent service through other programs at a MassHire Career Centers e.g., DTA Worker Participant Program; this should not delay enrollment into training funded through the MassAbility/MassHire Training Partnership.

Single Point of Contact Designation

Each MCC must designate and maintain a staff person to act as the Single Point Of Contact (SPOC) responsible for coordination with the MassAbility staff designated to assist the MassAbility participant to enroll in training. The MCC

SPOC will be responsible for providing the appropriate documentation for enrollment in training to the MHCWB.

MassAbility also identifies staff to act as the SPOC for local MassAbility offices that refer MassAbility participants to the MCCs for training. The MassAbility SPOC will be responsible for providing appropriate documentation to the MCC staff to initiate training enrollment.

The MCC and MassAbility Single Point of Contact list is shared on a regular basis with MCC and MassAbility staff assigned to the MassAbility/MassHire Training Partnership.

Training

In accordance with consumer choice requirements as stated in WIOA 20 CFR 680.340, MassAbility participants will be provided with the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). MassAbility participants in consultation with MassAbility staff will choose from the approved training courses listed on the ETPL in Training Pro. MassAbility participants together with MassAbility staff will identify appropriate training opportunities from the (ETPL) prior to referrals to the MCCs.

Click link here: [Eligible Training Provider List](#)

Please note there are no geographical restrictions on accessing training.

MassAbility participants may seek training services at any MCC. The selected training course may be located outside of the local workforce area to which the MassAbility participant has been referred. For example, a MassAbility participant referred to the Worcester local workforce area can access training that is in the Hampden County local workforce area as long as commuting to and from the training does not cause a barrier to participation and successful completion of the training. MassAbility participants may also participate in training courses offered virtually by training providers approved for the ETPL.

MassAbility staff must ensure the identified training is appropriate and the MassAbility participant meets training vendor requirements such as testing levels, CORI background checks, etc.

The MCC to which the MassAbility participants is referred is responsible for initiating enrollment into training regardless of training location.

Training funds may be used to pay for tuition, fees, and other reasonable expenses directly related to the training program such as books and lab fees.

For MassAbility participants who are co-enrolled in WIOA Title I, MCC and MassAbility staff should coordinate to determine what support services are needed and which entity can provide them.

For MassAbility participants only enrolled in training and not co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I, MassAbility will address the provision of support services.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA)

MassAbility participants eligible for training will have access to ITAs for approved courses listed on the ETPL. Contracts for the ITAs will be executed between the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHCWB) and the training provider. The career center SPOC will complete the attached Individual Training Account request form.

Training programs appearing on the Statewide ETPL are authorized for ITA training services for WIOA Title I participants, statewide.

In accordance with local policies and procedures an individual may choose training providers and programs outside of the local area provided the training program is on the state list. Local workforce boards can supplement the information available from the State ETPL to support consumer choice and the achievement of local performance indicators {20 CFR §§680.510 & 680.520}.

Regardless of the funding source, it is a recommended practice that, prior to approving customer enrollment into a training course approved by another local area, local boards should review training course description, performance and cost information and apply any local factors.

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

If an opportunity for OJT becomes an option for a MassAbility participant, the appropriate SPOC should contact the MHCWB for further instruction.

Referral Process

The MassAbility SPOC will contact the MCC SPOC on behalf of the MassAbility participant when a referral is made to the MCC for training. The MassAbility and the MCC SPOC will coordinate a time for the MassAbility participant to complete the career center registration. The MCC SPOC will then initiate the process to enroll the participant in training.

In a case where a MassAbility participant is identified for training by MCC staff, the MassAbility participant will be referred to the MassAbility SPOC to ensure

the Individual Plan for Employment is in place and MassAbility agrees with the participant's appropriateness for training. All referrals for training will come from the MassAbility SPOC.

MassAbility SPOCs will keep track of the individual MassAbility participants referred to the MCCs for training, including the date of referral and the career center to which the referral is made. MassAbility staff will ensure MassAbility participants qualify for paid services before a referral for training is made.

Referral information and completed packets from MassAbility should be forwarded in a timely manner to Hampden County including the attachments listed below.

Local areas should establish a process to track participant referrals and any needed follow-up.

The attached referral form (Attachment A) will be completed by MassAbility staff and must be accompanied by the participant's Individual Plan for Employment and the Shared Customer Release Form (Attachment B). MassAbility participants must sign the attached Shared Customer Release form agreeing to share career assessment results with career center staff.

To initiate enrollment into the training, the MCC SPOC will complete the Training Justification (Attachment C) and MassAbility Individual Training Request (Attachment D) forms and send these forms along with the MassAbility Referral Form (Attachment A) and the Shared Customer Release Form (Attachment B) to:

Steve Trueman
Vice President of Workforce Operations
MassHire Hampden County Workforce Development Board
1441 Main Street, 1st Floor
Springfield, MA 01106
FAX (413) 755-1364
strueman@MassHireHCWB.com

Enrollment packets should be forwarded to Steve Trueman within 10 business days to facilitate timely enrollment into training. Please note, this timeframe represents a best practice that assumes the referred participant has completed the Career Center Seminar within 10 business days and no extenuating circumstances exist (e.g., scheduling delays or temporary non-responsiveness).

Co-Case Management of MassAbility Shared Customers Enrolled in Training

MCC and MassAbility staff determine the local process for co-case management of MassAbility shared customers enrolled in training to ensure continuous contact while in training as well as post training. It is anticipated that MCC staff and MassAbility staff engage in case-conferencing regarding the participant enrolled in training. Case-conferencing is important to ensure coordinated, customer-centered service delivery that promotes efficiency and positive outcomes.

MCC staff will provide MassAbility participants co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I with a minimum, 30-day contact while in training, assistance with job placement after training completion, and follow up services after placement in employment. Both MCC and MassAbility staff will assist with placement of employment post training. MassAbility and MCC staff should coordinate co-case management of MassAbility participants to avoid duplication of service.

Tracking MassAbility Participants in MOSES

MCC staff must enter data in MOSES for MassAbility participants enrolled in training. Please see Attachment E: MOSES Tracking Guide for the MassAbility Training Fund (MRTF) for instructions on how to track MassAbility participants enrolled in training.

Voucher Payment

MassHire Career Centers will be eligible for a one-time voucher payment of \$1,000 for each MassAbility participant who has completed grant-funded training and secures employment. Placement in employment may have occurred at any point throughout the duration of the partnership. Participants must retain employment for a minimum of consecutive 90 days and must be currently employed. Employment must be permanent and may be either full-time or part-time.

Proof of employment and 90 consecutive day retention must be documented as part of the voucher payment process.

Documentation of employment includes:

- An employment verification letter from the participant's employer that includes the start date of employment, amount of wages, and full or part time status of employment; or
- Pay stubs for the employee that demonstrate at least 90 consecutive days of employment.

Documentation of 90-day retention in employment includes:

- Employment follow-up for 90-days in MOSES.

Master Agreement

The fiscal agent for each local area participating in this partnership must enter into a Master Agreement with MHCWB. The Master Agreement (Attachment G) is the contract document that permits voucher payments to be made to the MassHire Career Center upon placement of MassAbility participants into employment post training.

Voucher Invoices (Attachment H) are to be sent to the MHCWB for processing and payment. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board remits payment to the Career Center's fiscal agent upon receipt of the voucher payment invoice. Any local area that has not executed a Master Agreement with MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board will not have access to voucher payments.

Local MassHire and MassAbility Action

Required: Please ensure staff understand the content of this policy and take the necessary steps to ensure compliance with its requirements .

Attachment: A. MassAbility Referral Form (Completed by MassAbility)
B. Shared Customer Release Form (Completed by MassAbility Participant)
C. Training Justification Form (Completed by MCC)
D. MassAbility Individual Training Request Form (Completed by MCC)
E. MOSES Tracking Guide for the MassAbility Training Fund (MRTF) - Updated
F. MassAbility Individual Training Account Modification Request
G. Master Agreement
H. MassHire/MassAbility Employment Voucher Invoice

Effective: Immediately

Inquiries: Please email all questions to PolicyQA@Mass.gov Also, indicate Issuance number and description.