



**MASSACHUSETTS
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
JOINT PARTNER COMMUNICATION**

WIOA Joint Partner Communication 02.2024

☐ Policy ☒ Information

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

From: Diane Hurley, Acting Director
 MassHire Department of Career Services
 Katie Dishnica, Director
 Department of Unemployment Assistance
 Toni Wolf, Commissioner
 Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
 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
 Olga Yulikova, Senior Community Service Employment Manager
 Executive Office of Elder Affairs
 Jeffery McCue, Commissioner
 Department of Transitional Assistance

Date: **February 13, 2024**

Subject: FY24 and FY25 MassSTEP ABE and MassSTEP ESOL Planning and Implementation Competitive Request for Proposals

Purpose: To notify MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators, and other local workforce partners of the release of the [FY24 and FY25 0671/0661/0359 MassSTEP ABE and MassSTEP ESOL Planning and Implementation Competitive RFP](#). This grant offers applicants the opportunity to apply for both optional planning grants and implementation grants.

Workforce development partners are provided this information for awareness to fulfill their collaborative role in the MassSTEP ABE and MassSTEP ESOL planning and implementation program applications.

Background: MassSTEP services are accelerated models that allow participants to take adult education classes simultaneously with workforce training, in addition to workforce preparation activities. New applicants are encouraged to consider applying for planning grants for funds to determine potential needs for MassSTEP services.

The following priorities have been established for MassSTEP ABE and MassSTEP ESOL program proposals that are informed by evidence-based practice.

Planning: Priorities are to support applicants that propose to:

- Provide evidence of a collaboration that includes adult education, occupational skills training, business, and workforce partners
- Develop a plan and timeline to conduct a MassSTEP ABE or MassSTEP ESOL program analysis
- Identify a lead person to orient the direct work of the collaboration
- Provide evidence of outreach to local [MassHire workforce partners](#)
- Identify a target occupation
- Assess the collaboration's readiness to design and deliver a program that adheres to the [FY24–FY28 Policies for Effective MassSTEP Programs in Community Adult Learning Centers and Correctional Institutions](#).

Implementation: Priorities are to support applicants that demonstrate:

- a need for MassSTEP ABE and/or MassSTEP ESOL services
- Career pathway development in priority occupations as shown in the [WIOA local plan](#)
- Concurrent and contextualized adult education instruction, workforce preparation activities, civics education (MassSTEP ESOL), and workforce training (requirement)
- A program design of about 16 weeks in length (requirement)
- Partnership with one or more local area employers in the occupation that includes but is not limited to assistance with job placement/employment (requirement)

- Student attainment of one or more IRCs (requirement) and a high school credential (MassSTEP ABE requirement)
- Collaborations with local MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Centers, and/or [Chapter 74 Career/Vocational Technical Education](#) programs
- Commitment to delivering a program that adheres to the *FY24–FY28 Policies for Effective MassSTEP Programs in Community Adult Learning Centers and Correctional Institutions* and [MassSTEP Brand Standards and Implementation Guide](#)

Programs may submit multiple planning and implementation proposals. For example, an applicant could submit a proposal for a MassSTEP ESOL advanced manufacturing and another for a MassSTEP ABE welding.

Eligible applications are asked to please review the RFP and consider applying to join the growing Massachusetts MassSTEP system.

Action

Requested: Please share with MassHire staff and partners as appropriate.

Effective: Immediately

Inquires: Please contact [Derek Kalchbrenner](#) with questions.