

Mass Workforce Issuance

100 DCS 08.112

☒ Policy ☐ Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
Workforce Development Board Chairs
Workforce Development Board Directors
Title I Administrators
Career Center Directors
Title I Fiscal Officers
DCS Operations Managers

cc: WIOA State Partners

From: Alice Sweeney, Director
Department of Career Services

Date: February 23, 2018

Subject: **Career Planning for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Job Seeker Customers**

Purpose: The WIOA Career Planning for Job Seeker Customers policy is the replacement for the WIA Case Management policy (Issuance #04-34). The activity that was formerly referred to under WIA as Case Management is now called **Career Planning** under WIOA. The components of Career Planning are commensurate with the former fundamentals and principles of Case Management. This policy is to provide guidance and clarification to One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) managers and staff related to the uniform and consistent interpretation and application of the elements that constitute WIOA career planning for job seeker customers under a formal Individual Employment Plan (IEP) (formerly referenced as Case Management under WIA) and to ensure the integrity of reporting career planning activities and services through the Massachusetts One-Stop Employment System (MOSES).

Background: WIOA requires that One-Stop Career Centers provide services to individual customers based on individual needs, including the seamless delivery of multiple partner services to individual customers.

WIOA defines “Career Services” in three types: basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services.

Career Planning is the method of providing job seeker customers with a formal, structured plan of action designed specifically to identify an appropriate employment goal and to develop a schedule of activities and services that will empower the customer to overcome or mitigate barriers to attaining their goal(s).

Career Planning is considered to be an Individual Career Service. The term “career planning” means the implementation of a person-centered approach in the delivery of services. Case management (career planning service) is indeed a two-way contact – communication – via person-to-person, email back and forth on the same date or day, or a two-way telephone conversation of substance that results in a more direct, personalized, and real customer service that is value driven. The Career Planning delivery model is designed to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans for participants to ensure access to appropriate workforce investment activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer based technologies and to provide the appropriate job education, and career counseling during program participation and after job placement.

To ensure the accurate and consistent interpretation, data entry, and reporting of service elements provided to job seeker customers within the context of Career Planning, it is important that career center management and staff know which customer groups have been designated as eligible for Career Planning. They also need to be knowledgeable of specific Career Planning functions and the service elements and actions that fall within those functions, and to know the correct method for recording those service elements and actions in MOSES.

Policy: Formal Career Planning will be the standard service delivery model for job seeker customers.

Each customer receiving career planning services will also have a formal Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

It is highly recommended that all customers with significant barriers to employment who require individual services receive career planning services.

An Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is an individualized career service consisting of connected activities, jointly developed by the participant and career center staff. The plan includes an ongoing strategy to identify employment goals, achievement objectives, and an appropriate combination of services for the job-seeking customer to attain these goals and objectives. The Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is an effective tool to serve individuals with barriers to employment and to coordinate the various services including training services they may need to overcome these barriers.

Career Planning as defined by WIOA is a customer-centered, goal-oriented process in which an individual staff person, or a team of career center staff, assists a job seeker customer with the development and coordinated delivery of a

structured program of planned, interconnected services in order to achieve a specific employment goal. The career planning model implies a partnership between the One-Stop Career Center staff and the customer. The partnership involves distinct responsibilities aimed at linking the customer to appropriate career center services and ultimately, moving the customer to suitable employment. Systematic and timely data entry of all career planning activities ensures program continuity for each customer.

In order for career planning to be effective, the designated OSCC counselor must be fully responsible for monitoring the customer's progress throughout the entire service plan schedule, not only for those elements of the plan provided directly by the OSCC counselor, but also for services provided by other career center staff or staff of other service organizations.

Additionally, as a standard best practice, counselors should contact the customer within 30 days, but must contact them within 10 days, unless program requirements or contractual agreements stipulate shorter durations, such as the Veterans under the JVSG Program, to ensure timely identification and resolution of any issues that could either significantly impede or negate participation in, or successful completion of, any planned service activities (particularly in relation to key services such as assessment, counseling, training, job development, job referral, etc.) or jeopardize the overall attainment of the customer's employment goal. Regular contact with other direct service providers is also an important step in assessing progress and assuring the customer's overall success. Contact is defined as providing a recognized MOSES service and a detailed Note of said service in the Job Seeker record.

Career center managers and staff must note that career planning can occur across geographic career center service areas. Given that customer choice is a cornerstone of the service delivery model under WIOA it is conceivable, and in some geographic areas, likely that the development of a formal Individual Employment Plan (IEP) will involve the provision of services through more than one career center location. In such cases, the designated One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) counselor must maintain the overarching responsibility of assisting the customer with the development of an IEP with the optimal mix of services which will help the job seeker reach his/her employment goal(s) regardless of the career center location. The designated OSCC counselor must coordinate service delivery, conduct follow-up, and ensure that all necessary data and information is entered in MOSES in a timely manner, notwithstanding what individual, entity or career center is the actual service provider. For the benefit of the customer, communication among staff providing services through different Career Centers is essential.

If a OSCC staff person is working with a customer who is being managed through a different career center location, the staff person should ensure that services being provided are consistent with the customer's IEP and that the designated

OSCC counselor is informed of the customer's intent and/or actions. All services must be data entered in MOSES on a timely basis.

Consistent with established procedures, the OSCC staff person must also seek and obtain the appropriate MOSES / database access to make any modifications to the customer's IEP.

In some instances, a customer may choose to change career centers locations entirely. It will be the responsibility of the Career Center Director to ensure that the designated OSCC counselor formally transfers the individual's IEP to the new career center location and to a newly designated OSCC counselor. The transfer should be accomplished according to established protocols and practices.

The MOSES Career Planning component will record and report services and activities developed and undertaken under the auspices of an IEP and within the context of a career planning service model.

The MOSES Career Planning module supports all career planning functions from an individual's initial assessment and program eligibility determination through service delivery documentation, follow-up, and case closure. The tool also provides a "tickler" system to aid the designated counselor in monitoring the customer's progress in carrying out their IEP and in conducting timely follow-up activities. MOSES Career Planning also provides a framework to effectively record, manage, and track all aspects of each OSCC staff person's caseload.

Attachment A is a chart outlining the basic career planning functions: Assessment, Goal Setting, Strategy/Plan Development, Service Delivery Coordination, Follow-Up, and Case Closure. The chart provides general guidance regarding the documentation requirements related to recording career planning activities and information for each of the basic functions using the MOSES Career Planning tool. The chart should be used as a desk aid.

Action

Required: The following elements related to the provision of career services by required career center partners must be incorporated into career center operations by Local Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop Career Center Operators.

Effective: Immediately

Attachment: Career Planning Reference Tool

Inquiries: Please email all questions to PolicyQA@MassMail.State.MA.US. Also, indicate issuance number and description.

References: WIOA Section 3(8)(A)&(B)