



Workforce Issuance

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Policy Information

To: MassHire Workforce Board Chairs
MassHire Workforce Board Directors
MassHire Career Center Directors
MassHire Fiscal Officers
MDCS Operations Managers

cc: WIOA State Partners

From: Diane Hurley, Acting Director
MassHire Department of Career Services

Date: November 21, 2024

Subject: **The Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS)**

Purpose: To provide guidance to MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators and other partners regarding the specialized, targeted recruitment process for agricultural employers who seek recruitment assistance through the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS).

Background: The Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) is MassHire JobQuest in Massachusetts and provides agricultural employers a mechanism to recruit qualified US workers for temporary or seasonal agricultural work (less than a year-round basis). ARS includes a process for handling local, intrastate and interstate agricultural job orders. An employer can request to use the ARS system at any time, in accordance with the timeframes within which workers will be needed for the season.

It is suggested that employers should request workers no later than 10 - 12 weeks prior to the date of need to provide enough time to go through the entire process (Local, Intrastate, and Interstate recruitment) if desired.

Policy: JOB ORDER SUBMISSION

An agricultural employer may submit a clearance (job) order to the local MassHire Career Center (MCC). The clearance (job) order must detail the job requirements, including wages, any benefits, housing, and transportation provisions as applicable.

Employers may conduct agricultural recruitment without associating it with an H2A application. This allows for no cost, less regulations and no required timeframes.

However, if the employer is associating this job order with a future H2A application, or at any point decides to look into obtaining workers via the Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) H2A Program, employers must be immediately directed to start the application process at [H-2A Temporary Agricultural Program | U.S. Department of Labor](#). Housing must be provided, and the clearance (job) order information must be submitted to the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) FLC Unit at H2Aprogram@mass.gov as it must be reviewed and go through the regulated H2A Process.

LOCAL RECRUITMENT

Once the MCC has all the information they need related to the clearance (job) order, including the intended area of employment, the MCC must post the local job order in MassHire JobQuest so that jobseekers can view the job and apply for employment. MCCs may also physically post local job orders in their offices.

MCC staff should be briefed on new job postings and review local orders so they can refer interested candidates.

MCCs must make a concerted effort to promote and bring to the attention of jobseekers the clearance (job) order.

INTRASTATE AND INTERSTATE RECRUITMENT

If local recruitment efforts are insufficient, employers can request that the clearance (job) order be expanded to a statewide search (Intrastate) to recruit workers from within Massachusetts.

If no jobseekers are identified or more are needed, the employer can request that the search be expanded beyond Massachusetts to recruit from other states (interstate). MCCs who have employers who want to conduct interstate recruitment must send the clearance (job) order to MDCS at H2Aprogram@mass.gov. MDCS staff will coordinate approval with the Regional Department of Labor (DOL) Office.

The Regional DOL office will identify which U.S. states and territories the order may be sent.*

**The Regional Office takes into consideration data and historical records of farmworker migration patterns throughout the United States, including information on which states have more workers than they may need, who may be willing to apply to your job in another state.*

MDCS will send the order to the other approved states or territories. The Career Centers in the other states or territories will attempt to find sufficient workers anywhere within their borders.

MCC staff may be contacted by MDCS with recruited applicants who may be willing to migrate for jobs to assist in coordinating services, including potential interviews.

REFERRALS

Jobseeker applicants must go through the MCC to be referred to the job. This is beneficial and necessary because MCC staff must review the job description and qualifications with applicants to make sure they are a good fit.

MCC staff can also coordinate interviews and be available to support the agricultural employer by answering questions and making connections.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

MDCS will provide ongoing training and support to ensure MCCs are well-informed and comply with the ARS system.

Action

Required: Please ensure that local protocols are in place to deliver services in accordance with the ARS.

Please disseminate ARS information to all local staff, as appropriate, and ensure that local teams are well versed in the requirements, procedures and processes related to ARS.

Effective: Immediately

Inquiries: Please send questions and comments to PolicyQA@mass.gov, reference title of this issuance.