



Workforce Issuance

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☒ **Policy** ☐ **Information**

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

cc: WIOA State Partners

From: Beth Goguen, Director
MassHire Department of Career Services

Date: November 19, 2025

Subject: **WIOA Waiver Requests: Statutory and Regulatory Requirements**

Purpose: To provide guidance to MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators and other local workforce partners regarding the process for requesting waivers to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) statutory and regulatory requirements.

Background: WIOA establishes statutory and regulatory requirements to ensure the public workforce system operates with consistency and accountability. The Secretary of Labor has the authority to waive certain WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements to support innovation, improve outcomes, and strengthen workforce delivery services. Waivers may be leveraged to:

- Increase flexibility within allowable WIOA funding training opportunities.
- Engage discouraged workers with assistance in re-entering the workforce.
- Support employers in delivering training and upskilling to close skills gaps.

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

- Enhance access to participation in WIOA funded programs/services for jobseekers and youth.

Examples of waivers leveraged by other states to engage discouraged workers, expand training, and improve employer services are found in Attachment A. Information on the WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements that can and cannot be waived along with other states' approved waivers can be found [here](#).

Local areas are encouraged to consider waiver requests based on:

- Experience with program operations, participant engagement, or employer services.
- Identified barriers to participation or service delivery.
- Regulatory or statutory requirements that limit flexibility or effectiveness.
- Opportunities to promote positive outcomes for youth, jobseekers, and businesses.

WIOA waivers may be requested at any point during the year, including during the State Plan submission or modification process. Waivers modify the WIOA Combined State Plan and, once approved by U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), are generally valid for the duration of the approved plan.

Policy: MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) will review all local area waiver requests to assess their potential benefit to the overall MassHire system. Waiver requests will be selected for submission to DOL based on those that are expected to have the greatest impact to address barriers to participation in WIOA programs and services.

Local areas may submit more than one waiver request; however, each waiver request must be submitted as a separate request using Attachment B.

Selected waivers will be publicly posted for comment prior to submission to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Approved waivers will be for statewide utilization and will be optional for local areas to adopt and implement.

Action

Required: Local areas interested in requesting waivers must complete the Waiver Request Template found in Attachment B and email the completed template to Lisa.J.Caissie@mass.gov.

Effective: Immediately

Attachments: A - Example of Waiver Options
B - Waiver Request Template

Reference: TEN 25-24 / Leveraging Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Waivers to Increase Labor Force Participation and Worker Productivity