



DEPARTMENT OF
CAREER SERVICES

Workforce Issuance

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☒ **Policy** ☐ **Information**

To: Chief Elected Officials
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: May 10, 2023

Subject: **Initial RESEA and RESEA Reviews – Delivery and Documentation through In-Person or Electronic/Virtual Means**

Purpose: To provide updated guidance to MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators and other local workforce partners on the use of electronic/virtual means for the delivery of Initial RESEA and RESEA Reviews.

As established in the prior version of this policy MassHire programs and services are increasingly delivered in a virtual environment. As initially established in response to the COVID pandemic, staff may confirm documentation of customer participation and completion of all RESEA requirements through virtual methods. This includes verification of identity.

This policy has been updated to address the present status of virtual service delivery.

This policy update includes the following:

- Requirement for staff to verify customer identification during virtual or in-person Initial RESEA and RESEA Review meetings.

Background: The Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program for Massachusetts allows MassHire Career Centers flexibility in how RESEA services can be delivered.

This policy previously updated the usage and limitations of the electronic/virtual counseling means to be used to facilitate and document Initial RESEAs and RESEA Reviews between the MassHire Career Center staff and RESEA participants. The use of electronic/virtual means does not diminish the intent or requirements of the Initial RESEA and RESEA Review.

Policy: This policy update announces the requirement for staff to verify customer identification at both the Initial RESEA and RESEA Review meetings. In addition to providing reemployment services to return to work, RESEA is also a continued eligibility requirement for the unemployment insurance benefits program. Verification of a claimant's identity is within reason for meeting program eligibility requirements.

The use of electronic/virtual means for the delivery of Initial RESEA and RESEA Reviews includes scheduling, counseling, service delivery, documentation, and confidentiality. When conducting electronic/virtual Initial RESEA and RESEA Reviews, staff must adhere to the following:

1. Verify Identification at Initial and RESEA Review

- Staff are now required to check customer identification at the start of the Initial RESEA and RESEA Review meetings.

2. Electronic/Virtual Counseling Options and Scheduling

- Staff may offer RESEA participants the option of conducting their RESEA Review electronically/virtually, as well as in-person, when scheduling the Initial RESEA and RESEA Review.
- RESEA participants may change their RESEA appointment(s) delivery means, if necessary, prior to their RESEA Review, provided the MassHire Career Center is able to accommodate the request. MassHire Career Center policies should be clear regarding the process as this may involve sanctions. MOSES Notes must be updated timely to reflect the situation and outcome.
- Staff must schedule the electronic/virtual RESEA Review sessions at the Initial RESEA as they would schedule an in-person counseling session or meeting.
 - The Initial RESEA is to be scheduled once the customer completes the Career Center Seminar (CCS). If the customer has completed the CCS within 60 days of being enrolled in RESEA, staff must

schedule the Initial RESEA once they are informed of the customer's enrollment in RESEA. Management and staff are strongly encouraged to use the "Rainbow Report", weekly, to effectively manage RESEA customer services. The Rainbow Report can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/resea>

- The duration of the scheduled RESEA sessions should be appropriate for the material/topics to be discussed with the RESEA customer.
- Some customers may have worked toward some of the Initial RESEA requirements and/or starting their Career Action Plan via the MassHire JobQuest virtual pathway. Staff should review a customer's record prior to the scheduled RESEA meeting(s) and build upon the data researched/completed by the jobseeker.
- At the time of scheduling, staff must inform the RESEA customer of the documents that will need to be submitted prior to each RESEA session. Details regarding when and by what method documentation must be received, the date, time, and person who will initiate contact for the RESEA Review must also be documented for the customer and reflected in goal action steps or in MOSES Notes.

3. Scope and Limitations of Electronic/Virtual Counseling

- All virtual or telephone RESEA meetings must involve direct communication (visually and/or verbally) between staff and the RESEA participant. Telephone meetings should be considered only as a last resort (e.g., identity verification can be problematic).
- For virtual appointments, cameras must be turned on.
- Staff must conduct all electronic RESEA Review sessions during normal hours of operation, and use work issued phones, computers and career center sponsored (and protected) electronic tools.
- Staff may use a variety of acceptable virtual tools/platforms to accommodate RESEA participants.

These tools may include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ WebEx
- ✓ Zoom
- ✓ Apple Facetime (via Apple computer or work issued I-phone)
- ✓ Skype (via computer or work issued smart phone)
- ✓ Viber (via computer or work issued smart phone)
- ✓ Join.me (via computer)
- ✓ GoToMeeting (via computer)
- ✓ Google Duo

- ✓ Other: as appropriate and available

MassHire Career Centers will be afforded flexibility as to which virtual platforms they may offer their customers.

4. Electronic/Virtual Service Delivery

- Each RESEA Review session must be conducted in a similar manner to an in-person session with staff and customers taking turns conversing.
- RESEA Review documents to be reviewed should be sent in advance of the session via email, fax, mail, or hand delivery for the RESEA Specialist to review prior to the session in preparation for the review.
- If a customer has completed steps via the MassHire JobQuest Virtual Pathway, then their MassHire JobQuest record must be used as part of the RESEA meetings.

NOTE: Some of the available platforms, such as Join.me, allow for file sharing on the computer directly during the session and may therefore be utilized without the need to submit documentation prior to the session.

Prior to the end of the each RESEA session, staff must ensure the customer has a full understanding of the information that was covered and the agreed upon next steps.

5. Documentation

All electronic/virtual Initial RESEA and RESEA Review sessions must be documented in MOSES following the same protocols established for in-person sessions.

Staff must document in the “Notes” section in MOSES RESEA documentation that was viewed via live stream and that either a printout or screen shot of the document(s) is included in the customer’s file and/or JobQuest account.

Secure Email must be used when emailing documentation containing Personal Identifying Information (PII). Staff must ensure measures are taken to maintain appropriate security and privacy of documents sent electronically for purposes related to program eligibility.

All senders of electronic documents must use secure methods when emailing eligibility documents. Local areas should identify an appropriate secure email service for use with customers to exchange documentation containing PII.

6. Electronic Signatures

Participants must still sign documents when required. The use of electronic signatures is allowable. Forms required for signature may be converted into

fillable forms with the use of electronic signature software such as AdobeSign, DocuSign, etc.

When fillable forms are not available, staff may have the participant email agreement to the content of the required form. The email must be kept in the customer file. Staff shall not sign required forms on behalf of a participants. Participants must sign all required forms whether electronically or via email consent to the content in the required forms.

Action

Required: All MassHire Career Center Directors, Managers, and Supervisors must ensure career center staff check RESEA customers' identification to verify the identity of the person to whom they are speaking.

It is strongly suggested that this new policy requirement is announced in advance of all customer communications (e.g., emails and phone calls) to set expectations with customers up front and ahead of their meeting time.

The delivery of electronic/virtual RESEA meetings with customers by career center staff (state and partner) are conducted in accordance with the provisions of this policy issuance.

Effective: Immediately

Inquiries: Please direct all inquiries to PolicyQA@mass.gov. Also, indicate Issuance number and description.