

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Dear Massachusetts Workforce Development Partners,

After a comprehensive research process, it is my pleasure to present to you our workforce brand implementation plan. The purpose of the plan is to guide the transition to our new statewide identity: MassHire.

Over the past several months our team has had the honor of working with our workforce, employer, non-profit, and education partners to gather input on how the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can better meet the employment demands of our 21st century economy.

Together, we've analyzed other states who have gone through successful and unsuccessful workforce brand unifications. We've hosted brand development and analysis sessions with stakeholders from across the Massachusetts and conducted surveys to explore how employers and employees utilize our workforce system.

One of the biggest takeaways from this process has been an understanding that while our career centers and development boards are doing amazing work in their communities, there is a significant lack of awareness from employers and job seekers about the availability of these resources. Many people simply don't know who they can call upon when they need employment help and we need to change that.

By bringing the dozens of career center and workforce board names and logos into one master brand, we will ensure that no matter where an employer or employee is on their career journey, they know they have a single entity they can call upon to help them – MassHire. Whether you are an advanced manufacturer on the North Shore looking to hire qualified workers, or a recently arrived resident in Holyoke looking for high demand training opportunities, we want our customers to know that MassHire will be a reliable partner to help them succeed in the Commonwealth's economy.

The following plan will help guide you and your team through the brand unification process. Because this is not just about putting new names on the doors, this is about a cultural shift in how we interact with our communities and business partners to help them succeed.

Thank you to everyone who put so much time and hard work into the development of this plan. I'm really looking forward to working with you all on its implementation and helping the best workforce system become even more responsive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosalin Acosta", with a stylized, flowing script.

Rosalin Acosta

Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development

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IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

This implementation plan is intended to be a roadmap that can be used by the Massachusetts workforce system to implement the new brand. It will review how we got here – the brand journey, who our audience is, and who, when, and how we should communicate the new unified face of the workforce professionals in Massachusetts.

There are some key facts that we should keep in mind when reading through this implementation plan. Firstly, we are executing to this master brand to significantly increase **awareness, visibility, access and affinity of our brand**. Secondly, when executed correctly, this brand will serve as a platform to drive a common organizational culture among workforce system employees. It will take all of those involved in our public system to work together to ensure that the brand and its key messages - along with the experiences our business community, partners and job seekers have with the system are aligned and in sync with the essence of the new brand.

This has been a collaborative process with ongoing opportunities for input and engagement. Together, we have created a unified brand – **MassHire**. This powerfully simple name with an equally compelling logo has been market tested with our key stakeholders (job seekers and businesses) and did very well in this formal testing phase. Now, we must have an even greater level of collaboration and cooperation to ensure that our public launch within our marketplace is smoothly executed and understood by both the business community and job seekers.

In this plan, you will find all the information necessary to inform your key audiences/stakeholders and those who will be affected by this transition about the new brand. It will cover areas such as the new nomenclature (naming conventions), how to use the new naming and logo (Style Guide), branded materials that you will have access to via the state web portal, talking points and discussion about the launch strategy and how you can participate in the statewide and regional launches. Lastly, a timeline and checklist are provided to ensure that everyone involved in the transition stays on track.

Before we learn about the elements of this Implementation Plan, we want to answer two questions that many within the system have been asking:

DOES BRAND UNITY MEAN THAT ALL LOCAL AREAS WILL BE EXACTLY THE SAME?

No! The needs of employers, job seekers, and workers differ throughout the Commonwealth, and so do your services. Industry priorities differ – manufacturing can be important in some places, and education may be important in others. However, the experience of our brand should be the same regardless of what part of the system people encounter.

WHY DO I NEED TO FOLLOW THE STATEWIDE BRAND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN?

The goal of this project and this process is to better serve employers and job seekers. By following the Implementation Plan as indicated here, you will be in the best position to introduce the new brand to your customers. It is precisely because of the system's focus on the needs of your customers – businesses and job seekers – that the brand transition and implementation plan must be followed across the entire system. Finally, transitioning a large number of entities to a common brand is tough work, and we don't want to look sloppy – this is the best way to ensure that our new look is ready for show time!

OUR BRAND JOURNEY

HOW WE GOT HERE

HISTORY

Massachusetts is home to a thriving economy, and that success generates its own set of challenges. In 2017, statewide jobs of 3.63 million were at new highs (MA Workforce and Labor Area Review 2017). At the same time, employers in a variety of industries including healthcare, manufacturing, technology, hospitality, and more are finding it harder and harder to hire workers. The Commonwealth's working age population and labor force are growing, but at a slower rate than jobs, leading to skill gaps for employers. An average of 97,500 people were working part-time involuntarily. Black, Hispanic/Latino, disability, and veteran populations continue to face higher than average rates of unemployment.

The Massachusetts public workforce system is a vital tool in efforts to meet employer hiring demands, secure employment for job seekers, and maintain economic growth in the Commonwealth. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), was signed into law on July 22, 2014, designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in today's global economy. WIOA is the first legislative reform of the public workforce system in fifteen years.

Massachusetts was required to develop a strategic plan – the WIOA Combined State Plan. This was adopted in April 2016. This plan responds to the demands of the job market through Demand Driven 2.0, an approach that improves responsiveness to employer needs and prepares job seekers for high-demand employment; better serves job seekers by treating each individual as a shared customer across agencies; and makes special efforts to assist certain populations facing barriers to employment.

Branding is one piece of the larger strategy that will allow state, regional and local entities to be driven by employer demand and thus improve outcomes for all job seekers. In the state plan, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) is required to create better branding/promotion of the services afforded by One-Stop Career Centers, and all local workforce development activities under the purview of both the State and local Workforce Boards. This branding strategy will allow our Commonwealth to meet the goal of "[increasing] talent recruitment and hiring for business partners through business outreach, candidate referrals, and education and training services that match business need."

OUR BRAND JOURNEY

HOW WE GOT HERE

WHY IS BRANDING SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF MEETING OUR GOALS?

Simply put, job seekers and employers did not identify career centers and workforce boards as part of a larger statewide network of integrated services and job training programs. Workforce boards, career centers, and state partners are all committed to serving businesses and job seekers across the Commonwealth and can function as part of a unified system, but this is not the message that we communicate externally. Inconsistent branding permeates state, regional and local workforce systems, and as a result, businesses and job seekers lack awareness of the depth, breadth and interconnectedness of public workforce resources available in the Commonwealth. An example of how this has actually played out in one of the 16 regions follows:

A major employer met with a local Workforce Board and the Director of Career Services (DCS) to discuss the full array of services available to them from the MA workforce system. They were impressed with the types of services that were available to them to address their hiring needs. Knowing they had recently opened another facility in a different region, we questioned whether they had worked with our Career Center in that region. They indicated they had not. However, when DCS contacted the Career Center in the new area and asked if they had worked with this employer, it was determined that they had been on site with the employer for two months and had placed over 200 new employees with the business. **Bottom Line:** the employer had been working with our public workforce system all along, but was not aware that this valuable resource was part of a strong, interconnected system.

ANALYSIS AND DISCOVERY

In early 2017, EOLWD competitively procured a branding team to embark on a research-based collaborative process to evaluate the current landscape, propose a research-based recommendation on how to better brand our system, and implement the recommendation. Phase I of this process occurred over a five month period (May - September 2018), and included focus groups with workforce system stakeholders, interviews with several Secretariats, legislators and other high-level stakeholders, and a review of case studies from other states and market research with employers and job seekers.

Our market research during Phase I was led by Market Street Research, a professional, Northampton-based market research firm with 30 years of experience. Market Street Research surveyed 512 MA residents and 179 employers to understand current awareness and perceptions of the MA Workforce System (MWS). Unaided awareness (top-of-mind) revealed that most job seekers and employers do not think of the MWS as a resource for their employment needs. Only 6% of employers and 7% of job seekers named a career center as a resource for employment related services; and one workforce board was named as a resource. With such low top of mind awareness, it was clear to everyone involved that a branding effort was not only needed but critically important to achieving our goals of improving access, visibility, and utilization of our workforce system by employers and job seekers. For more information on this market research, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/branding-webinars>.

OUR BRAND JOURNEY

HOW WE GOT HERE

BRAND DEVELOPMENT

Phase II of our work began with a full day of creative articulation with workforce, education, economic development, health and human services, businesses and job seekers. This process, known as StoryJam™ allowed our stakeholders to collaborate with each other to determine the system's brand by articulating the values, vision, mission, essence, position, promise, platform and personality of the new brand. The by-product of that session created a Brand Charter – the foundation from which we build strategies, tactics, accountability and delivery for living the brand and delivering on our promise to our customers.

Once the Brand Charter was developed by the brand team and reviewed by internal and external stakeholders, the next step in the brand process was the naming and logo development phase. A total of five names and five marks were approved for Phase II market testing. Market Street Research conducted an online survey of job seekers aged 18-64, over-sampling the unemployed population, with 510 respondents from whom we can generalize to the Massachusetts job seeker population. Market Street also surveyed MA employers with 3 or more employees who are actively involved in recruitment and hiring for their companies/organizations, with 156 respondents from whom we can generalize to the Massachusetts employer population. The clear winner with both respondent groups was MassHire. For more information on this market research, please visit:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/branding-webinars>.

With the name and logo selected by our key stakeholder groups, the completed research regarding current perceptions and awareness of the brand, and the Charter developed by the system, the brand team moved on to finalizing a recommendation regarding the Brand Architecture, or the way the dominant brand applies to local areas and state entities. When the brand transition has occurred across the Commonwealth, the Massachusetts Workforce System will be known as MassHire.

Phase I quantitative and qualitative research demonstrated low unaided awareness, external confusion generated by the varied naming structures, and a perception of a fragmented system, so a consistent and unified Brand Architecture was proposed. Local workforce boards will be referred to as the MassHire Workforce Boards, career centers will be MassHire Career Centers, and both will have a regional or local geo-locator specific to the area (i.e. MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board & MassHire Springfield Career Center). To ensure coherence across local and state entities, the Department of Career Services will become MassHire Department of Career Services and the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board will become the MassHire State Workforce Board. Partner organizations (like our state agency partners) will be co-branded while events and programs that are part of the system will be endorsed by MassHire.

On March 6, the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board voted unanimously in favor of this proposal. This Implementation Plan represents the next step in the branding process.

OUR KEY BRAND TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS

As we begin to roll-out this brand statewide and within each region, we need to remind ourselves of the key stakeholder groups with whom we need to communicate. The communications strategies that we develop for each group should be well thought out to ensure that the benefits of the new brand and what it stands for are clearly articulated and understood by all. The four stakeholder groups who need to be considered in this communications strategy and who should be the main focus for the brand transition are:

- **Internal Staff** (Workforce professionals across the system)
- **Local Workforce Board Members and Elected Officials**
- **Workforce Customers** (businesses, job seekers and the general public)
- **Strategic Partners** (both intra-agency partners and those outside the workforce system)

INTERNAL STAFF

One of the most critical stakeholder groups we need to communicate with on a regular basis is our internal staff – those workforce professionals from the executive team to the front-line staff. We need to think of the internal staff as brand ambassadors regardless of whether they have those official titles or not. Internal staff are directly involved in serving the workforce’s customer base and their actions have an immediate impact on how the brand is perceived and whether the brand charter is being lived up to in the minds of the customer.

Internal staff want to be informed about large decisions that impact their organizations and want to learn this information from a known, trustworthy source rather than hear about changes from external sources. During the transition process, it is critical that the local executives communicate regularly with their teams. Utilization of the brand’s newsletter which is a monthly communications tool should be considered. Mentioning the progress of the brand transition during regular staff meetings or in already scheduled email communications is another good option. Executives should consider communications during important milestone periods – i.e. the statewide brand launch which will most likely attract media coverage. A good rule of thumb for those local executives who are responsible for internal workforce professional staff:

When communicating to internal staff, remember that they want to know how this will impact them directly. They might be wondering:

- Will this impact my employment?
- Will I be asked to do additional work or will my job be changing?
- Will my job be easier or harder after the transition?
- Will I be given any training so that I am prepared to answer questions posed by our customers?

Don’t communicate externally if you have not first done so internally.

OUR KEY BRAND TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS

Taking these concerns off the table and responding to them will go a long way to ensuring a successful brand launch in your region. By focusing on the many benefits of a unified brand and how it will enhance customer awareness and the system's reputation for ingenuity, reliability, respect and collaboration, we should expect a sense of eager anticipation and pride for the public roll-out of MassHire in each of the Commonwealth's regions. Be sure to explain clearly that staff will have an opportunity to be trained through the enculturation training process. This internal training program will provide an identical orientation to the MassHire brand that was available to workforce system leaders. Each region will have one or more Brand Ambassador who will be available to answer questions or concerns and will be communicating the training program once they have been trained themselves.

For example, as you launch the branding process, local board directors and/or career center directors may want to send an email to staff that includes the following:

- A statement about your excitement about the transition
- Name of the brand ambassador(s)
- The new master brand and the local brand
- Timeline for the regional transition
- What will be changing

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP WITH THE BRAND TRANSITION?

Each local area is encouraged to develop and promote creative brand-enhancing programs that best fit the culture of your organization. You might consider the following items to help encourage acceptance and adoption of the brand culture within your own organization:

- Produce a regular email communication from the organization's director or Brand Ambassador to provide updates on local progress
- Forward state-produced Branding Newsletter updates
- Nominate your employees for the soon-to-be-announced MassHire Awards if they demonstrate our brand values of Collaboration, Reliability, Respect, and Ingenuity in their day to day behaviors and interactions with customers and partners
- Recognize employees who are first-movers in implementing the brand in your local area. For example, if an employee participates in transitional planning an implementation, making great suggestions about how you should communicate to key customers, and is first to sign up for training, they could be recognized as "Employee of the Month" or in other local employee recognition opportunities.

Beyond the unification of the name and logo of our workforce system, this transition gives the system a platform to examine how we currently communicate and engage with our customers. It is a chance to identify and make improvements to ensure that we are positioned to deliver on the brand promise of MassHire. Take inventory with your team and challenge them to make improvements where it matters with job seekers and employers. How you answer the phone, greet customers, take care of them and follow up with them can all be moments of great impact. The new brand serves as an ideal launch pad to examine and strengthen the customer experience.

OUR KEY BRAND TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS

LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD MEMBERS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

Much like internal staff, Board members expect to be kept informed about major milestones affecting their organizations. Board members are ideally positioned to market the new MassHire brand because they interact with other businesses, community organizations and local and state elected officials. As each board begins to think about their transition plan, timeline and process for communicating with their constituents, this implementation guide will be useful but we do understand that each region might want to modify this plan to suit their business objectives. Be sure to include a mechanism for keeping local elected officials not on your board apprised of key transitional developments prior to the public brand launch at the state level and also include them in any plans for your regional launch.

This group will be especially interested in the business and financial impacts of the transition, so it will be important to share that information. Board Members may be particularly interested in the transition timeline in this document. Also of interest will be common language or talking points that have been developed in this document. A Frequently Asked Questions document will be available to workforce boards to get them comfortable with answers to questions that might come up with business and community groups across the state.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP WITH BRAND TRANSITION?

Executive level staff will individually determine which major decisions related to the branding initiative merit action by their boards (i.e. choosing a particular geo-locator etc.). During this implementation period there will likely be many other opportunities to involve board members and elected officials in the transition and brand launch. Board members should be encouraged to participate in opportunities to discuss the new brand and the implementation timeline with business and industry colleagues. As the brand implementation is being adopted in a board's local area, other ways to help communicate the new brand could be:

- Author Op-Ed articles and letters to the editor in region's daily and weekly newspapers in support of the new brand. Work with EOLWD Director of Communications, to ensure that the proper talking points are being utilized.
- Join launch-related events in 2018 – both at the state and regional level
- Host networking events with the business community to introduce them to the new brand.
- Speak at business trade association events
- If allowed, participate in news media interviews as a regional spokesperson
- Post, repost, and share social media activity on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter

OUR KEY BRAND TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS

JOB SEEKERS

Our Phase I research indicated that there was little to no unaided awareness about the current workforce system in Massachusetts. This low awareness level can play to our advantage as we roll-out the new brand here in the Commonwealth. But, we are still faced with a challenge for the 20% of job seekers who currently use the system. They need to hear that we are changing our brand. The visual identity of the career centers will be changing during the transition (name/logo/signage/branded materials) and they need to be engaged and educated about what this means for them, our mission and the services we deliver to them. An exciting opportunity also lies ahead for the many Massachusetts residents who are not currently using our services or know there is a system there to help them with their career goals. Career Centers should consider utilizing assets that are being developed that will ease the transition process, such as:

- Desktop or easel signage that can be displayed throughout the Career Centers
- Website banners and notices on existing websites in advance of the full transition
- FAQ documents that can be displayed throughout the Career Center to help explain the new brand identity and what it means for the job seeker.
- Email Signature Reminders that can be used 60 days before full transition
- Social Media Posts and Tweets to be used during the transition period
- Talking Points to be used by internal staff when sharing word of mouth news about the brand transition

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP?

Beyond the unification of the name and logo of our career centers, this transition gives the system a platform to examine how we currently communicate and engage with our customers. It is a chance to identify and make improvements to ensure that we are positioned to deliver on the brand promise of MassHire. Take inventory with your team and challenge them to make improvements where it matters with the job seekers. How you answer the phone, greet customers, take care of them and follow-up with them all can be moments where staff can have a big impact with the job seeker. The new brand serves as a great launching pad to examine and strengthen the customer experience.

OUR KEY BRAND TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS

BUSINESSES

Much like the job seeker audience, employers are a key component to the success of the workforce system, but also employers had extremely low unaided awareness about the system. Without employers, we would not be able to link job seekers to employment and career advancement opportunities.

During our Phase II testing of names and logos, MassHire was more than twice as popular as the second-most favored option. There was also a high likelihood that businesses would use or refer to an organization with the MassHire name and logo. This data provides us with a great opportunity to communicate directly to the business community and establish positive awareness and increased affinity to our brand. We want them to better recognize the value we are bringing to their hiring needs.

The timing of employer education will coincide with our outreach to job seekers. Some of the same tools will apply to both audiences, including:

- Website banner notices in anticipation of the launch
- Q&A and FAQ documents specifically directed to businesses
- Email signature reminders
- Social media posts that can be directed to both audiences
- Participation in launch events – both the statewide event and the regional events
- Op-Ed's or Letters to the Editor to express support for the new brand
- Advertising and earned media targeted to businesses

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

The implementation plan/roll-out of the brand relies on seven strategic areas that will allow us to prioritize what needs to get done and will identify those resources that are available to Boards and Career Centers as you activate the brand in your local area. We will concentrate on the following:

- Nomenclature/Naming
- Universal Brand Assets
- Digital Outreach
- Communications
- Internal Orientation/Training
- Brand Launch/Roll-out
- Success Measurement

The objective of this plan is to create a system-wide transition at both the state and local levels that:

- Clearly articulates to the entire workforce development system the roles and responsibilities during the brand transition
- Attracts interest and action with internal and external stakeholders who are the beneficiaries of the system's resources
- Generates attention by our key influencers
- Increases the awareness of the workforce system among our target audience(s) so they clearly understand the role of the boards and the career centers in building and maintaining a competitive workforce in Massachusetts

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

I. NOMENCLATURE/NAMING

The primary reason Massachusetts is aligning the workforce system under a common brand is to raise awareness of the depth and breadth of the system's resources among our key audiences – businesses and job seekers. However, in order to achieve brand equity, we must apply a consistent naming structure to both the career centers and the boards. This alignment among all workforce entities will enhance our brand equity and position the system in a more unified, accessible manner. Our naming structure consists of a Master Brand [MassHire] and a sub-brand identify formed by using MassHire + a geo-locator or regional identifier + the phrase "Workforce Board" or "Career Center". Each regional area has the option to adopt the same regional name for the board AND their career centers OR use a regional name for its board BUT a geographic city or town based on where the career center is located. To ensure statewide consistency, names that do not align with these geographical guidelines are not permitted. Local areas with two Career Centers in one city (i.e. Boston) may select a neighborhood-specific designation for the Career Center (i.e. Downtown and Roxbury).

Editorially, when MassHire appears in any written form, MassHire is one word, with no spaces between "Mass" and "Hire" with the 'M' and "H" always capitalized.

The visual representation of the master brand and the two options for Boards and Career Centers can be seen below:

MASTER BRAND



OPTION A for Regional Adherence to Brand Standards:



OPTION B for Regional Adherence to Brand Standards:



This naming architecture will be clearly articulated in the Brand Standards Manual where we will provide examples of each region's accepted naming convention. Adherence to the naming architecture is required and cannot be changed without written approval by EOLWD.

TAGLINES

While taglines can be an effective communications tool, EOLWD has decided that we will not be adopting a tagline for this branding initiative. Regions should not use an existing tagline that they have developed as part of their previous communications strategy, or any other tagline that has not been approved by EOLWD. This will be noted in the Brand Standards Manual.

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

II. UNIVERSAL BRAND ASSETS

By the end of May 2018, and prior to the orientation and training process, MassHire will have developed a series of assets that can be used by all local workforce boards and career centers. These materials will ultimately reside in the MassHire online brand portal. The following brand assets will be ready by May 2018:

- MassHire Brand Standards Manual
- MassHire Brand Charter
- Email Signature
- Business Card Template
- Letterhead and Envelope templates
- Signage Templates
- Powerpoint Templates
- Fully downloadable, customizable, and brand-compliant web template
- Regional Logos (full-color, grey scale, B&W and reverse; available in JPEG, EPS and PNG formats)
- “M” graphical mark
- E-Newsletter Template in Word
- Key Messages and Talking Points
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) One Pager
- Enculturation Training Guide
- Brochure Template
- Customizable Brochure or Rack Card used as an outreach tool to introduce the new brand to your constituents

Other items that will be available before the statewide launch of the brand in August 2018 will include:

- Advertising Assets (social media posts, digital assets, any ads that are created, etc.)
- Social Media Posts and Tweets
- Brand Launch Media Kit
- Reveal Video used at Statewide Launch

Should new templated materials be needed, regions should outreach to EOLWD to determine the feasibility of additional development. If those items are approved, once they are designed, they will be uploaded to the portal and all regions will be notified of any additional materials.

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HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

SIGNAGE

We understand that every office has different signage needs. Some organizations reside in state buildings and the signage is controlled by DCAMM. Others reside in office suites in larger buildings and have no external signage. Some location signage is dictated by landlord specifications/requirements. EOLWD will be taking all of that into consideration when proposing various signage options. Should you feel that we have not correctly identified options that could work for your specific office, please reach out to your Brand Ambassador who will notify EOLWD.

Local areas will have the option of working with a centralized vendor through EOLWD to purchase signage or working with a local vendor. Costs to use a local vendor should not exceed costs of using a centralized vendor through EOLWD.

BRAND STANDARDS REVIEW PROCESS

All boards and career centers must follow the Brand Standards manual as described above. However, we understand that each region may have specific, unique externally facing materials that have been created specifically for them. As you transition to the new brand, you will want to also determine how best to modify those materials to include the unified brand, you will need to submit those materials for review to your region's Brand Ambassador, who will gain approval from EOLWD/DCS as needed within 5 business days of submission. These reviews are conducted to ensure that all entities are following the standards established, and to ensure that materials developed are eligible for reimbursement. This includes materials that are co-branded with state or regional partners. The following materials must be reviewed by the Brand Ambassador for brand compliance and submitted to EOLWD/DCS prior to completion:

- External and internal signage specifications
- Website templates
- Public outreach materials outlined in Criterion 5 for Implementation Incentive funding

REIMBURSEMENT FOR WEB DEVELOPMENT AND SIGNAGE AND USE OF CENTRALIZED VENDORS

Local areas will have the option to purchase external and internal signage and web development services locally or through a centralized vendor. If services/signage are purchased locally (not through a centralized vendor), the local area's Brand Ambassador must submit photo of proof of signage and/or home page web mock-up to EOLWD/DCS for approval in order to be reimbursed for expenses. Photos or web mock-ups should be emailed to PolicyQA@mass.gov with headline "MassHire Rebranding Reimbursement Approval." All requests will be responded to within 5 business days.

If a local area uses the centralized vendor(s), it does not need to submit proofs or mock-ups for approval.

Costs associated with use of centralized vendor should be included in the proposed budget. Once the budget is approved, these costs will be invoiced directly to and paid by EOLWD.

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III. DIGITAL OUTREACH

Technology and specifically web-based technology is the way that brands drive communication and messaging. We need to create digital assets that build a foundation that best positions the brand in the market place with clarity, consistency and cohesiveness. When that happens, the state and local areas will benefit from that uniformity.

Websites have become the single most utilized communications tool for any organization. Because of this, we need to have a clear demonstration of brand unity and as more and more people view both the state website and local sites, we will build brand equity and be seen as a strong interconnected statewide system of resources. The following plan is being put in place to provide a unified web presence but also provide some flexibility for regions to utilize their own local web resources and highlight unique local operations.

All local areas will need to publicly transition their old websites to the new template by the date of the local area's launch of the new brand, as articulated in the area's Local Implementation Plan, no later than October 31, 2018. The final local web template must be reviewed by the Brand Ambassador and submitted to EOLWD/DCS for review in order to a) be reimbursed for web development expenses as outlined in a local area's budget and b) qualify for Implementation Incentive funding.

Currently, the Department of Career Services is on the Commonwealth's web portal (mass.gov). This is where the new MassHire brand will live. EOLWD is purchasing the domain name – Masshire.com and using that domain name in all printed and digital materials/communications. When users type in that domain, they will be redirected to the appropriate pages on mass.gov. We have also purchased the corresponding domain names (.org and .net) to ensure that no other entity purchases them.

Boards and Career Centers have several options relating to purchasing website domain names, listed below; local areas should select their options and include them in the Naming Form by May 1, 2018. Any other website structure should be discussed with and approved by EOLWD to ensure consistency with other regions.

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Some workforce boards and career centers live on the same website; others independently operate websites. In general, a single website for the region is always an easier point of contact for an employer or job seeker and is preferred. However, given the constraints of implementation and various local requirements, local areas have the option of having separate sites for boards and career centers.

OPTION #1: Workforce Board and Career Center does not share a website AND is adopting the same nomenclature.

For Example: www.MassHireBerkshire.com and www.MassHireBerkshireCareerCtr.com

OPTION #2: Workforce Board and Career Center(s) shares a website.

For Example: www.MassHireBristol.com

When landing on this home page, all three Career Centers are clearly identified on the home page.

OPTION #3: Workforce Board and Career Center does not share a website and are not adopting the same nomenclature.

For Example: www.MassHireNorthCentral.com and www.MassHireLeominsterCareerCtr.com

Abbreviations for geolocators are allowed to shorten the name of the website (i.e. Berk for Berkshire, FH for Franklin-Hampshire, Central for Central Region, etc.). Any other variations on this website domain structure must be approved by EOLWD via the Naming and Website Form, Due May 1, 2018.

Please consider purchasing other domains (.org and .net) to ensure that others cannot utilize them.

We are also recommending that current local websites be automatically redirected to your new URL upon your brand launch.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION/SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

When the master brand is launched, it will be crucial to introduce an aggressive online campaign to ensure that MassHire's brand family can be easily found and search engines correctly direct users to the appropriate locations. We will be working on a plan to initiate SEO and SEM for the master brand. Local boards and career centers may also wish to consider similar outreach programs for their newly branded websites.

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HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

IV. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Communication, internally and externally, is vital to the brand building efforts. However, if communication is not coordinated and everyone is saying something different about the brand, the marketplace will be confused and the brand will not be successful.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

We have several system-wide communications tools that have been developed that will allow us to communicate to our internal staff, board members and elected officials about our progress. Our e-newsletters will be going out monthly to a broad group of constituents and we encourage those who receive it to pass it along to all internal staff and others who engage with the system.

Project Team calls and communications with the field will continue through the full implementation and those individuals will be asked to share news and highlights with their colleagues as well.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

“If you build it, they will come.” This is never a good strategy when building a new brand, and we must be pro-active about telling the story of MassHire to a larger audience. The communications strategy that works the best is a combination of a Public Relations-Earned Media/Paid Media/Social Media.

As we move to the statewide launch in August 2018 and as the local areas transition to the new brand, there will be many opportunities to tell our story through the above three communications channels.

EARNED MEDIA

When we do the statewide launch in August 2018, the event and the press surrounding that event will be handled by the EOLWD Director of Communications, Charlie Pearce. If you are interested in participating in the statewide launch or subsequent regional launch events please reach out to [Labor and Workforce Development Media Contact | Mass.gov](#). All media advisories and subsequent press releases that come from EOLWD and/or the Governor’s office will be uploaded to the web portal and can then be shared with regional partners.

We will also be providing press release templates that can be used to announce regional transition plans and launch events.

PAID MEDIA-POST LAUNCH

The best way to maximize an effort as large as this rebranding is to provide some broad based paid media that would run across the state announcing the new MassHire Brand. Before the end of this fiscal year, EOLWD and More Advertising will work together to design a paid media plan that will take advantage of the state’s available resources (i.e. MassDOT digital billboards and MBTA advertising.)

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media tools are essential to ensuring that your message is getting to every audience. We need these tools to connect with our existing customers, engage with new ones and maintain credibility with system partners and elected officials.

Prior to the state launch, we will be providing guidance on how each entity should transition their growing social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

MESSAGING

The plan is to have a library of common messages, talking points and frequently asked questions. These will be available on the portal and available to everyone who needs help articulating the new brand, the reasons for moving to a unified brand and how the process will work. The messages below will not be the only messages that will be available. We will be adding more as we work through some early transitions and determine the need for further clarification.

TRANSITION MESSAGING

Some may be wondering whether they will be able to verbally or in writing reference their current names for a period of time. For example, a staff member is attending a Chamber Breakfast in Cambridge. She might introduce herself as "Ms. Jones from MassHire Metro North Career Center, formerly Career Source Cambridge." This is perfectly acceptable and it will assist those customers most familiar with your current entities. We believe that an interim period is acceptable but should not last more than 6 months.

COMMON MESSAGING

About MassHire and the brand transition

WHO IS TRANSITIONING?

Massachusetts' workforce development system - the Department of Career Services, the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board, 16 local workforce boards and 29 career centers throughout the state are transitioning to a new statewide brand.

WHAT IS TRANSITIONING?

Each of these entities will assume a new, consistent name aligned with the new master brand – MassHire.

WHEN WILL THE TRANSITION TAKE PLACE?

The statewide launch will take place in August, 2018 and the regional transitions will be occurring between August and January 2019.

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

WHY RE-BRAND THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM?

To better serve the businesses and job seekers who currently have a low awareness level of the depth and breadth of the publicly funded employment services, training opportunities and resources available to assist them. The process of rebranding the system was a collaborative and transparent process and involved nearly 1500 businesses, job seekers, internal stakeholders, partners and elected officials.

WHAT'S CHANGING?

The Department of Career Services, the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board, 16 local workforce boards and 29 career centers will have new and aligned names and use the same mark/logo. This initiative, however, is more than a name and logo change. Existing customers – job seekers and employers – will see that the team of professionals they trust to assist them will remain unchanged. We are using this opportunity to reexamine our organizations and make improvements where they are needed. With this new brand, our career centers will be more visible locally and businesses will see that our system is a statewide connected system of resources whether you are in the Berkshires or on Cape Cod.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE CURRENT BRANDS?

The myriad of brand names that currently exist will be phased out and by January 2019, when the unified system will be complete.

HOW IS THIS BEING FINANCED? HOW MUCH DID THIS COST?

This effort is being financed over three fiscal years out of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Discretionary Funding and will not be funded out of existing career center and development board budgets. The costs are split into two categories:

Local Implementation Grants - \$972,000

- Up to \$600,000 is allocated to transition costs for local areas, including signage, collateral development, website development, and other related costs. Up to \$372,000 is allocated to Implementation Incentive Grants awarded to local areas that transition on a timeline that is aligned with the state launch and can be expended on allowable program costs.

Centralized Transition Costs - \$550,000

- As of March 2018, the Commonwealth has allocated \$550,000 for two rounds of market research, brand development, web services, an online learning platform and program design for local staff, regionalized asset templates, a reveal video, and other related brand development and implementation services.

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

(Messaging continued)

ABOUT MASSHIRE – THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE WORKFORCE SYSTEM

MassHire consists of a statewide workforce development board that provides policy oversight and designs statewide strategies to address critical workforce needs; the Department of Career Services (DCS) within the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development that administers workforce programs and funding for the entire system; 16 regional workforce development boards, 29 career centers, and their affiliates. The local workforce boards design strategies and programs that best meet the local needs of the businesses and job seekers in their region. The career centers located across the Commonwealth provide the necessary services to their local businesses that have workforce needs and job seekers looking for meaningful employment.

OUR BRAND'S MISSION

MassHire creates and sustains powerful connections between businesses and job seekers through a statewide network of employment professionals.

OUR BRAND'S VISION

MassHire envisions a better future for people and businesses of Massachusetts through meaningful work and sustainable growth.

OUR BRAND'S VALUES

- **Collaboration:** MassHire believes in the power of partnership and streamlined integration of services to achieve effective and timely results for those we serve.
- **Respect:** MassHire is committed to understanding and valuing the diverse, unique requirements and professional goals of the businesses and people we serve.
- **Reliability:** MassHire creates trust and reliability by consistently delivering high quality professional services at each location and in every interaction.
- **Ingenuity:** MassHire leverages flexibility, expertise, and knowledge to successfully meet our mission, regardless of new challenges and circumstances.

OUR BRAND'S PROMISE

MassHire promises to champion prosperity, connecting employers with talent and job seekers with tools, services, and connections to achieve meaningful and sustained employment.

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

V. INTERNAL ORIENTATION/ BRAND TRAINING

As we have said in various sections of this guide, a brand is only as powerful as the individuals who live it and can articulate the brand's values and vision. We have taken great strides to make sure that this brand was built from the inside out and got input and collaboration from a cross section of the workforce system – internally and externally. With the hard work of developing the brand behind us, we now have the task of ensuring that our professional teams (and board members) can deliver the brand in a way that lives up to the Brand Charter. Because our workforce professionals directly affect the brand experience of customers and stakeholders, we need to ensure that they are introduced to the brand in a uniform way, understand their role in introducing the brand to the market and embrace the promise we have developed for our customers.

The training consists of an interactive online course of about 30 minutes in length featuring perspective from workforce professionals, board, staff and executive leadership discussing elements of the Brand Charter.

To support the development of this training session, we have videotaped a number of individuals from the above group who will be able to share stories of their role in the system and how they plan to live the new brand.

A brief guide that can either be printed or viewed online will be available on the portal. It will serve as a common tool for introducing and reintroducing the brand to key stakeholders.

We will be conducting these trainings with an integral group of individuals from each region known as Brand Ambassadors. The ambassadors will play a critical role in disseminating the internal training to as many people in their region as possible. Each local area has been asked to nominate one or more Brand Ambassadors and they will serve as the primary point of contact for their region should people have questions about the roll-out or what the brand means to them. They will also ensure that the brand is uniformly executed in their region.

The plan is to conduct the enculturation training on May 24, 2018, and Brand Ambassadors will train their region no later than the end of August 2018. This will align with our planned statewide launch in August 2018.

THE PLAN

HOW WE WILL GET THIS DONE

VI. BRAND LAUNCH/ROLL-OUT

The current plan is to do a statewide launch of MassHire in August 2018. We will hold at least one event with a local area has agreed to become an early adopter of the new brand and is on track to meet all Implementation Incentive criteria. The Governor or his designee will be in attendance to roll-out the brand and to visually showcase the power of the new statewide brand. On the date of the launch, we will also switch to the new, rebranded web portal and will formally announce the transition plans for the regions.

Regional offices will be invited to attend the event and be encouraged to utilize their social media platforms and websites to announce that the new brand has launched. This will also be an opportune time for regional locations to prepare their own press releases using the press release template announcing their transition plans.

We also would like to see regions develop their own regional launch plans as they transition to the new brand. These events should be coordinated with EOLWD to ensure that there is capacity to help with these events and that there is no overlap in scheduling these activities.

VII. SUCCESS MEASUREMENT

With the brand launch scheduled for August 2018, how will we be able to measure the success of the new brand? Because we incorporated a comprehensive qualitative assessment of marketplace awareness into the branding process, we now have a benchmark to evaluate future success. We will need to conduct another qualitative assessment equal to the Phase I research to assess if market awareness has increased. The brand must be fully activated for at least 18-24 months before the market testing is done again. As operational changes occur, additional benchmarks can be tracked such as increased use of services, numbers of job seekers helped or number of new businesses engaging with the system.

2018 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

April 13	Local geolocator change request deadline (optional)
May 1	Reveal Video Completed Meet Criteria 1 and 2 to be eligible for Implementation Incentive Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designation of Brand Ambassador• Naming Structure Confirmation
May 14	Upload Final Training Materials for use in Enculturation Program
May 21	Website Template for Regions complete
May 24	Enculturation Training with Brand Ambassadors and select senior team
June – September	Brand Ambassadors lead trainings in their respective regions
June 1	Budget due
June 16	Meet Criteria 3 to be eligible for Implementation Incentive Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Brand Implementation Plan
August	Statewide launch of brand State website live State transitions go live (DCS & MWDB)
September 1	Meet Criteria 4-6 to be eligible for Implementation Incentive Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal Name Change or DBA• Local Outreach Materials• Delivery of MassHire Brand Orientation
September 10	Recognition of Local Areas Completing all Criteria at MWDB Meeting & Award of Implementation Incentive Funds
September 28	All regions complete internal transition to new brand, including printed materials, signage, websites
August - October	Rolling regional launches of new brand
Early November	Statewide promotion of new brand begins
January 1	End of optional transitional co-branding period

TRANSITION CHECKLIST

STATIONARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE

- ☐ Letterhead and Envelopes
- ☐ Business Cards
- ☐ ID Badges
- ☐ Voicemail
- ☐ Email Signatures

NOTIFICATIONS:

Who to notify

- ☐ Internal Staff
- ☐ Customers – Job Seekers/Employers
- ☐ Partners/Stakeholders

NOTIFICATIONS:

What to notify stakeholders about

- ☐ Statewide rollout
- ☐ 60-Day notice of transition
- ☐ 30-Day notice of transition
- ☐ Your regional launch event (if applicable)

PUBLIC AND MEDIA RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

- ☐ News Release Templates
- ☐ Media Kits
- ☐ Reveal Video
- ☐ E-Newsletters
- ☐ Pop-up Banner Displays

SOCIAL MEDIA

- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Posts/Tweets

IDENTITY GUIDELINES:

Download for use in transition

- ☐ Brand Standards Manual
- ☐ Brand Charter

COLLATERAL

- ☐ PPT Templates
- ☐ Brochure Template for Job Seekers Services
- ☐ Brochure Template for Employer Services

ADVERTISING

- ☐ Media Buys
- ☐ Creative Assets

WEBSITES (Local)

- ☐ Domain names/URLs
- ☐ SEO/Keywords/SEM Plan
- ☐ Mobile Optimization for New Website

TRAINING: Utilization of statewide enculturation training w/staff & stakeholders

- ☐ Boards & Staff
- ☐ One-Stop Career Centers
- ☐ Key Partners/Stakeholders

FACILITIES SIGNAGE

- ☐ External
- ☐ Internal

LEGAL

- ☐ DBA/Business Registrations (if applicable)
- ☐ Incorporation (if applicable)
- ☐ Bylaws (if applicable)

LEGAL PROTECTION GUIDELINES

The following is general information, and does not substitute for specific legal advice.

TRADEMARK

EOLWD is pursuing plans for trademark protection of the “MassHire” master brandmark. This legal protection may not extend, however, to the unique sub-brandmarks or local signatures chosen by the local workforce boards and career centers and approved by EOLWD. Accordingly, workforce boards and career centers may choose to evaluate legal protection for its individual sub-brandmark or local signature.

FICTITIOUS NAME REGISTRATION

Each local board and career center should decide whether it wishes to register its new local brand name as a fictitious name (i.e., “Doing Business As” or “DBA”) or seek a full name change to its articles of incorporation to change from its current name to its new brand name. An entity often decides to seek a DBA registration to use its new brand name as a secondary name, while retaining its primary incorporated name. In Massachusetts, a DBA filing is required on the local level instead of the state level, and, accordingly, there is no single form for entities to use when filing for a DBA, so check with local county clerks or city offices for details.

USE OF THE “MASSHIRE” NAME BY CAREER CENTER OPERATORS

Local workforce boards should make expectations regarding the use of the “MassHire” name clear in awarding career center operator contracts. The “MassHire” name and all related collateral belong to EOLWD, and to the extent that local boards and career centers adopt their own unique sub-brandmarks or local signatures it is with the approval of EOLWD. Accordingly, if a career center operator ceases to operate a network career center then the operator may no longer use the “MassHire” name or any related collateral.