



# Workforce Issuance

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☒ **Policy** ☐ **Information**

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**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:** Alice Sweeney, Director  
MassHire Department of Career Services

**Date:** October 28, 2020

**Subject:** **Staffing MassHire Career Centers to Provide Meaningful Access to UI Services – Level 1 and Level 2 Service Provision**

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**Purpose:** To notify MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators, and other local workforce partners of a new proposal to address the influx of Unemployment Insurance (UI) related requests to MassHire Career Centers through two levels of staffing and training.

**Background:** The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS), and representatives from MassHire Workforce Boards and Career Centers have worked jointly over several months in a workgroup to understand and define what level of access to UI services can and should be provided through MassHire Career Centers.

The workgroup has operated given the following context: 1) MassHire Career Centers have experienced a large volume of dual MassHire / DUA customers with inquiries about both re-employment *and* unemployment insurance; 2) MassHire Career Centers are required to provide “meaningful access to unemployment services” for customers through WIOA; and 3) DUA Walk-In “In-Person Services” will

not resume until Phase 4 of “MA Re-opening Plan.” With this context in mind, the workgroup had several goals that have yielded the following products:

- Catalogue of UI-related requests coming into the MassHire system
- Definition of roles that can support future UI-related requests
- Definition and development of training required for these roles
- Support plan for any MassHire roles interfacing with UI
- Implementation and communication plan

After an initial review of common UI-related inquiries and topics, the workgroup determined that two levels of UI support would be appropriate through the MassHire system:

**Level 1: Basic, general UI knowledge with no access to UI online**

- All MassHire staff serving customers receive Level 1 UI 101 training and are able to answer generic questions
- Refer to Level 2 for additional inquiries

**Level 2: Enhanced view-only access, able to answer some customer-specific questions**

- Staff are designated by Career Center leadership to receive Level 2 training and act as Level 2 staff
- Staff have view-only access with a few defined enhancements
- Higher level of training of what certain components of claims mean, and when customers can fix themselves versus when they need to go to DUA
- Direct access to DUA for referrals through Career Center Queue Line and Problem Resolution Unit Inbox

The primary goal of this initiative is to better equip MassHire staff who are fielding UI questions to answer these UI questions and maintain relationships with customers who have both unemployment and re-employment needs. In order to ensure that the main identity of MassHire remains tied to re-employment services and manage customer demand, no changes to UI service level will be publicly announced at this time.

**Level 2 Staff Training, Assignment, and Referrals**

Each Career Center will be required to a) designate Level 2 staff to be trained; b) determine which staff are assigned to a Level 2 role and at what time; and c) develop an internal referral system to support customer inquiries.

**Training:** Each Career Center must designate at least two staff members to participate in Level 2 training

**Assignment:** Career Centers must assign at least one staff member to be available at all times for either a) internal inquiries from Level 1 staff or b) customer appointments. Appointments can be virtual or in-person depending on the time period and the Career Center’s operations.

- It is recommended that staff assigned to Level 2 training and roles are 1) trained Navigators or b) staff members that were temporarily reassigned to DUA at the height of COVID and has gone through some level of DUA training.
- As an alternate option, Career Centers may partner with another MassHire Career Center to deliver Level 2 services virtually. This means that a different Career Center must agree to allow your staff access to their Level 2 trained staff at an agreed upon rate/time. A referral protocol must be established for this process.

**Internal referral protocol:** Once the Level 2 staff are identified, they will go through the Level 2 training, and local Career Centers will establish a “referral” protocol between their non-Level 2 trained staff (Level 1 trained) and Level 2 trained staff; only Level 2 staff can refer directly to DUA via the Career Center queue line.

**Policy:**

**Level 1 Training**

Career Centers are required to share information about Level 1 training with **all-customer facing staff**. Information about Level 1 training is available in issuance MWF Issuance #14-364 at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massworkforce-wioa-training-information-issuances> .

**Level 2 Staffing**

Career Centers are required to submit the following by **November 6, 2020**:

1. Names and positions of staff registering for Level 2 training;
  - a. Dates and registration process for Level 2 training are available in issuance at MWF Issuance #14-364 <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massworkforce-wioa-training-information-issuances> and staff should register via links in the issuance as soon as they are identified.
2. Proposed implementation approach to provision of Level 2 services, including:
  - a. Schedule of staff available for internal referrals (Level 1 to Level 2)
  - b. Schedule of staff available for customer appointments
  - c. *This implementation approach must indicate the proposed number of Level 2 trained staff that would be available for internal referral and customer appointments at any given time.*
3. Internal referral process, including (if relevant) any referrals external to career center if sharing staff time

Please submit the above in a word document to [marina.r.zhavoronkova@mass.gov](mailto:marina.r.zhavoronkova@mass.gov) and [Elizabeth.goguen@mass.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.goguen@mass.gov).

**Action**

**Required:** Please share this policy guidance with all appropriate managers, staff and partners.

**Effective:** Immediately

**Inquiries:** Please direct all questions to Marina Zhavoronkova at [marina.r.zhavoronkova@mass.gov](mailto:marina.r.zhavoronkova@mass.gov) .

Please reference this MassHire Department of Career Services Workforce Issuance number in your inquiry.