

Mass Workforce Issuance

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☐ Policy ☒ Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
Workforce Board Chairs
Workforce Board Directors
Title I Administrators
Career Center Directors
Title I Fiscal Officers
DCS Operations Managers

cc: WIOA State Partners

From: Alice Sweeney, Director
Department of Career Services

Date: June 30, 2016

Subject: **Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) VII – Funding Opportunity**

Purpose: To notify Local Workforce Boards, One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce partners of a funding opportunity, *Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Cooperative Agreements (Round VII)*, through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) announced on Grants.gov June 27, 2016.

Background: A number of provisions in WIOA emphasize and increase the requirements for the general workforce development system and One-Stop Career Centers to meet the needs of job seekers with disabilities, increase their access to high-quality workforce services, and to prepare them for competitive integrated employment leading to economic self-sufficiency.

This announcement solicits applications for Round VII of the DEI. The purpose of the program is to provide funding to expand the capacity of American Job Centers (AJCs), also known as One-Stop Career Centers, to improve the employment outcomes of three population focus areas:

- 1). Adults (ages 18 and older) with visible and non-visible disabilities, including those who have acquired disabilities in adulthood;
- 2). Youth (ages 14-24) with visible and non-visible disabilities, including those who have chronic health conditions; and
- 3). Individuals (ages 14 and older) with significant disabilities.

The DEI plans to accomplish this by increasing their participation in career pathways systems and successful existing programs in the public workforce system in partnership with vocational rehabilitation, community colleges and other education, human service, and business partners. Capitalizing on the flexibility that the career pathways model provides to use innovative service delivery strategies, grantees will use their award to support job-driven approaches in their pre-existing career pathway systems and programs. This will further equip individuals with disabilities with the skills, competencies, and credentials necessary to help them obtain in-demand jobs, increase earnings, and advance their careers.

Funding Opportunity Number:	<u>FOA-ETA – 16-07</u>
Application Deadline:	August 1, 2016
Expected Number of Awards:	8
Total Program Funding:	\$15,600,000
Award Ceiling:	\$2,500,000
Award Floor:	\$1,500,000
Period of Performance:	42 Months
Eligible Applicants*:	See below

**Cooperative agreements will be awarded to a lead applicant, which will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the cooperative agreement. This responsibility may not be delegated. The lead applicant must be the state workforce agency (SWA) that is eligible for funding under Title I of WIOA or for funding under the W-P Act. The SWA, as well as the Local Workforce Development Board(s) identified as a required partner for this grant, must be involved in existing career pathways systems, programs, and partnerships.*

The key objectives of the Round VII DEI have been categorized to help operationalize DEI in three key functional areas:

- 1). Excellent Customer Service;
- 2). Innovative and Effective Service Design;
- 3). Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing

Action

Requested: Please share the information regarding this funding opportunity with management, staff and partners as appropriate.

DCS is seeking input from local areas with regard to program design. If your local area is operating a career pathways program that would fit with the design elements of this funding opportunity, please let us know. All ideas are welcomed and appreciated. Please send an email outlining your current program and ideas for utilization of this grant opportunity to Jason Albert at Jason.Albert@MassMail.State.MA.US by close of business on **July 7, 2016**. If you are submitting an email of interest you are strongly encouraged to review the full funding opportunity for activity and program parameters.