

Attachment A

Rapid Response Set-Aside (RRSA) Grant Application Process

1. Set-Aside Application Development

Rapid Response staff will work with the local board to determine whether an application to request a Rapid Response Set-Aside (RRSA) grant is appropriate.

Local areas may request RRSA funds to address the following eligible events:

- To provide services for adversely affected workers when the local areas annual Title I Dislocated Worker allocation is insufficient to meet the additional need created by smaller dislocation events that do not merit the submission of a separate National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) proposal.
- In the circumstance that current local service capacity cannot meet the demands of increased Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) activity.
- To explore the feasibility of either a full or partial buyout of the company by the employees.
- To “bridge” the service gap while developing an NDWG proposal for a significant workforce dislocation event or waiting for a decision from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) with respect to a NDWG application (or modification) submission.

When funding is provided as a “bridge” grant pending award of an NDWG grant, the Commonwealth’s policy is to recapture funds expended/obligated from the RRSA grant subsequent to the effective date of the NDWG per the conditions delineated in the grant Statement of Work.

Applications (see Attachment B) for RRSA funds must be developed in collaboration with the local area Rapid Response Coordinator and must be reviewed by the Coordinator for completeness prior to official submission to the MassHire Department of Career Services (see also Attachment D).

The review of each RRSA application will include an analysis of the obligation and expenditure status of all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), NDWG, and any other Set-Aside funds contained in the local area budget. Therefore, it is incumbent upon each local area to assure that accounting for each funding source is accurate and up to date. A completed Set-Aside Fiscal Application Form must be included with all proposals (see Attachment C).

RRSA funds may only be used for the following purposes:

- **Administrative Costs:** 5% limitation
- **Training Services** (Individual Training Account (ITA), On-the-Job Training (OJT), Group Training, Customized Training)*
- **Vouchering** – NDWG bridge-funding only
- **Basic Education Services** (Adult Basic Education (ABE), English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)) only in conjunction with training services
- **Staffing**

- **Employee Buyout Feasibility Study**

*If RRSA funds are to be used for ITA, OJT, Group, or Customized training services, local areas must provide such training in a manner consistent with the Commonwealth's policy guidance specific to the particular method of training to be undertaken.

2. Rapid Response Set-Aside (RRSA) Grant Application Criteria

In order for a layoff or closing event to be considered for RRSA funding, the local area must submit an application (Attachment B) that has been reviewed and determined to be complete by the local Rapid Response Coordinator.

To be considered complete the application must include:

1. **Section A:** Number – Original, Revision or Modification Number.
2. **Section B:** Local Area name and local contact information.
3. **Section C:** Company/Workforce information - name, address, number of locations, company product/service, number of workers affected and layoff dates, WARN status, TAA status, number of affected workers to be trained.
4. **Section D:** Type of RRSA grant request (RRSA stand-alone, Trade staffing, NDWG Bridge funding or Buyout Feasibility Study)
5. **Section E:** Description of the Triggering Event - summarize the circumstance on which the funding request is based. Include a clear demonstration of insufficient local capacity with current resources, names of all affected workers currently enrolled as career center customers and a list of all career center services received within prior three (3) months.
6. **Section F:** Description of worker demographics and the barriers to their reemployment.
7. **Section G*:** Description of:
 - ✓ Planned service strategy for targeted workers
 - ✓ Outreach Plan
 - ✓ Service schedule that is initiated within a two-week period from the date of the individuals' referral to the designated MassHire Career Center
 - ✓ Service plan describing the types of services to be provided
 - ✓ Description of the basis/rationale for the number of planned participants

* If RRSA funds are being requested for the purpose of conducting a study to determine the feasibility of a full or partial employee buyout of the company, the information required for G is a description of the elements to be covered by the proposed feasibility study.

3. Signature

Whether submitting an initial application or a request for modification, Section I must include the signature of the MassHire Workforce Board Executive Director and date of signature.

4. Budget and Budget Narrative

Submission of a RRSA Application package must also include a completed ***Rapid Response Set-Aside Fiscal Application***. Instructions and specific forms, including budget and budget narrative templates are located in Attachment C.

5. Local Rapid Response Coordinator Completeness Review

Prior to official submission to the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) for funding consideration, the application and all supporting documents must be reviewed by the local Rapid Response Coordinator for completeness. If complete, the coordinator will affix a checklist (see Attachment F) attesting to the completeness of the application package. The checklist is to be included as part of the official submission to MDCS.

6. Application Submission

All Rapid Response Set-Aside funding applications and supporting documents should be forwarded to:

Ken Messina, Rapid Response Manager
MassHire Department of Career Services
Saltonstall Building, 5th Floor
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

Application packages may be submitted electronically to Ken.Messina@mass.gov followed by a hard copy with original signatures.

7. Application Review Timeline and Notification

Set-Aside Applications will be reviewed by the MDCS Rapid Response Set-Aside Committee comprised of five (5) voting MDCS staff members. The Committee will review and act upon each application within a two (2) week time period from the date of the receipt of a complete application. In addition to the specific data and information included in the RRSA Application and the RRSA Fiscal Application forms, the Committee will also consider:

- timing of the layoffs;
- size of the dislocation;

- needs of the affected workers;
- availability of funds;
- the extent to which the local area demonstrates that local resource capacity is insufficient to provide the level of services necessary to meet the needs of the targeted dislocated workers; and if applicable,
- the extent to which the local area demonstrates both a high volume of customers eligible for services under current TAA petitions and an insufficient level of current staff resources to meet the increased demand.

The Committee may invite other individuals to participate in the review process as non-voting “ad hoc” attendees. Such individuals may include but are not limited to:

- Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator
- AFL-CIO Rapid Response Coordinator

Only the designated voting members will deliberate and vote on a proposal. A quorum of no less than three (3) voting members is required to deliberate and conduct a vote with a simple majority needed to make a final determination.

It is the goal of the Commonwealth that email notification will be provided to the Local WDB within one week of the date of the application review. At that time, additional information and/or planning documents may be requested. The MassHire Career Center Director and the area’s designated Fiscal Agent will be copied with regard to either a formal decision or request for additional information.

Funds may be awarded incrementally, based on specific performance criteria.

Requests for end date extensions as well as other modification requests that do not require additional funding can be approved at the discretion of the Rapid Response Manager without a formal Set-Aside meeting.

8. Rapid Response Set-Aside (RRSA) Grant Modification

To request a modification of an existing RRSA Grant, Section H of the application form must be completed in full and submitted for consideration with a cover letter summarizing the modification request and either a copy of the original grant application or the most recent modification (whichever is relevant).

The modification request must include:

1. name of RRSA grant
2. date of modification request
3. assigned RRSA grant number
4. period of performance
5. original grant amount
6. prior modifications and amounts if relevant
7. total expenditures to date

8. unexpended obligations
9. additional funds requested through this modification
10. number of planned participants
11. number of participants served to date
12. number of training participants to date
13. additional number of participants to be served through this modification
14. new total number of participants to be served
15. new total number of participants to be trained
16. detailed explanation for the requested modification.

9. Grant Reporting Requirements

Program Reporting Requirements

A. Participant Enrollment

- a. All individuals who are served with RRSA funds must be enrolled in MOSES, including customers served at other career centers through the vouchering program. A Career Center-Specific program will be set up in MOSES for this purpose.
- b. All RRSA customers **must be co-enrolled** in the Dislocated Worker program

B. Reporting

- a. As required by the MDCS Statement of Work, participant tracking will be entered into MOSES and a participant activity report must be submitted to the Rapid Response Coordinator by the 20th of each month.

Questions on RRSA reporting should be directed to Norca Disla-Shannon at Norca.Disla-Shannon@mass.gov or 978-722-7013.

Fiscal Reporting Requirements

RRSA funds are considered separate and distinct from formula funds and will not be added to the current fiscal year WIOA local allocation. Expenditures for RRSA funds will be tracked separately.

A Fiscal Status Report (FSR) for each grant *must be submitted by the local fiscal agent electronically. For grants funded with regular WIOA Set-Aside funds, the FSR must be submitted no later than the 20th of each quarter to:*

Deborah.A.Walcott@mass.gov and
Norca.Disla-Shannon@mass.gov

The Commonwealth reserves the right to recapture unexpended RRSA grant funds. Also, as cited earlier, if Set-Aside funding is provided as a “bridge” while awaiting approval of an NDWG, upon receipt of the NDWG expended/obligated RRSA grant funds will be recaptured subsequent to the effective date of the NDWG per the terms of the grant Statement of Work.