



MASSACHUSETTS

Workforce Investment Act

WIA Communication No. 04-53

☒ **Policy** ☐ **Info**

To: Chief Elected Officials
Workforce Investment Boards Chairs
Workforce investment Board Directors
Title I Administrators
Career Center Directors
Title I Fiscal Officers
DCS Regional Directors
DCS Area Directors

cc: Susan V. Lawler, Commissioner, Division of Career Services
Bob Bickerton, Associate Commissioner, Center for Lifelong Learning and Teaching, MA Department of Education
Judith Gill, Board of Higher Education
John Wagner, Commissioner, Department of Transitional Assistance
Jonathan Raymond, President, Commonwealth Corporation

From: Jane C. Edmonds, Director, Departments of Labor and Workforce Development

Date: June 18, 2004

Subject: **Referral Process between One-Stop Career Centers and Adult Basic Education Programs and Alignment of Assessment Tools**

Purpose: To inform Local Workforce Investment Boards, management and staff of One-Stop Career Centers, the Department of Education Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) staff and adult basic education providers of the implementation of policies regarding (1) the referral of customers between Career Centers' workforce development services and the Department of Education's adult education programs; (2) the mutual use of the TABE by Career Center, DOE and local provider staff as the accepted tool to assess an individual's basic reading, math and language skills in order to effect appropriate and beneficial inter-organizational referrals across an enhanced network of workforce development and educational service practitioners.

Background: To enhance and improve customers' access to a broader array of beneficial services through the workforce development and adult educational systems in Massachusetts it is necessary to develop a more collaborative and coordinated relationship among the Commonwealth's One-Stop Career Centers, the Department of Education and local Adult Basic Education and English language service providers funded through DOE, known as Learning Centers.

Effective collaboration and coordination that will benefit consumers may best be achieved through:

- a strengthened referral process between Career Centers and local Learning Centers to promote concurrent educational and placement services, provide customers and staff with current program status information and reduce duplication, and
- an aligning of the assessment process that utilizes tools consistent with ACLS/DOE standards, namely the TABE Forms 7 and 8 (Tests of Adult Basic Education) for basic reading, math and language skills, and allows for mutual staff access to test scores and results. Using the same Forms (7 and 8) of the TABE (as opposed to Forms 5 and 6 or 9 and 10) will allow scores to be comparable across organizations and across the state.

To more fully realize the potential benefits of an enhanced level of coordination and collaboration amongst the various organizations and to streamline and strengthen consumer access to services provided through the state's Education and Workforce Development sectors, the Commonwealth implemented an electronic interface between the MA Department of Education's SMARTT database and the Division of Career Service's MOSES database. The implementation was announced in WIA Communication No. 03-17. Changes to the DCS MOSES system to accommodate the SMARTT/MOSES Interface were made in MOSES Version 10.5 that became operational on June 17, 2003.

As of July 1, 2003 all customer information entered by either local Career Center or Learning Center staff has been populating the SMARTT/MOSES system. Statewide training related to the implementation of the SMARTT/MOSES Interface was provided for all Career Center staff during July, 2003. Training focused on the entry of referral and assessment data related to the functionality of the interface.

The SMARTT/MOSES interface expands the concept of "one-stop" shopping, providing for direct electronic customer referral and data sharing between the state's One-Stop Career Center system and the network of local Adult Basic Education and ESOL providers funded through the Department of Education's Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) program. The interface will improve the efficiency of both the referral and assessment processes for customers of both adult basic education and workforce development services.

Policy: REFERRAL

To ensure timely and efficient access to local services, all referrals of customers between DOE funded Adult Basic Education or English language programs and the state's One-Stop Career Centers will be effected through utilization of the SMARTT/MOSES interface. To initiate and complete customer referrals staff of the One-Stop Career Centers, the Department of Education and local Learning Centers will adhere to referral procedures prescribed for the SMARTT/MOSES interface. The referral process enables staff of a One-Stop Career Center, DOE or a Learning Center to initiate a referral to one another's programs and to review initial program eligibility by providing necessary information and data electronically, eliminating redundancies in the referral/intake/registration process.

ASSESSMENT

To assure that referrals of customers to Adult Basic Education programs meet customer needs and that enrollment in specific class offerings are not unduly delayed as a result of insufficient assessment of skill level, staff of local Career Centers will conduct formal assessment of customers in need of, and who are ready, willing and eligible to participate in basic education services in accordance with standards set forth by the MA Department of Education. Therefore, prior to initiating a referral to any DOE-funded Learning Center for Adult Basic Education services, trained Career Center staff will administer the TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) as the standard tool to assess the educational and language capacity of customers in need of referral to ABE services.

Career Center staff will administer only long forms 7 or 8 of the TABE (in conjunction with the TABE Locator). The TABE 7 or 8 long forms are the only acceptable pre-test assessment tools approved by DOE for determining an individual's educational level in order to assure enrollment in an appropriate level ABE program. Prior to administering the formal assessment test, Career Center staff will utilize the TABE Locator to determine the appropriate level of the long form TABE 7 or 8 tool to be used for any specific individual customer. TABE Forms 5 and 6 or 9 and 10 and the TABE Survey *are not acceptable*.

Upon completion of an individual's assessment test, Career Center staff will submit all appropriate TABE scores/results to a selected local provider through the SMARTT/MOSES interface.

NOTE: *This policy does not affect current practices related to services or preliminary assessments for limited English speaking Career Center customers or referrals to Learning Center ESOL services.*

Training for Career Center staff on administration of the TABE assessment battery and use of the SMARTT/MOSES interface to effect referrals will be scheduled during June. Specific dates and locations will be announced under separate cover. Please review the attached TABE portion of the DOE Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual (ATTACHMENT A) and ask staff who will be administering and scoring the TABE to familiarize themselves with it before attending the training sessions.

Effective: July 1, 2004

Inquiries: Questions related to this policy should be directed to Marilyn Boyle, Division of Career Services at mboyle@detma.org or Donna Cornellier, Department of Education at dcornellier@doe.org.

Filing: Please file this in your notebook of previously issued WIA Communication Series Issuances as 04-53.