

Attachment A

Rapid Response Set-Aside (RRSA) Grant Application Process

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 area's 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 Emergency Grant (NEG) 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 NEG proposal for a significant workforce dislocation event or waiting for a decision from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) with respect to a previously submitted NEG proposal. When funding is provided as a "bridge" grant pending award of an NEG grant, the Commonwealth's policy is to recapture funds expended/obligated from the RRSA grant subsequent to the effective date of the NEG per the conditions delineated in the grant Statement of Work.

NOTE 1: *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 Department of Workforce Development (see also Attachment D).*

NOTE 2: *The review of each RRSA application will include an analysis of the obligation and expenditure status of all Workforce Investment Act (WIA), NEG, and 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:

- **Training Services** (Individual Training Account (ITA), On the Job Training (OJT), Group training, Customized training)*
- **Basic Education Services** (Adult Basic Education (ABE), English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL))
- **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 (guidance specific to these training methodologies are currently in development).

NOTE 3: *Except for the case of a buyout feasibility study, it is the expressed intent of the Commonwealth that a majority of requested RRSA funds be directed to training services.*

Rapid Response Set-Aside (RRSA) Grant Application Criteria

In order for a mass 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. All relevant form information in Section A: Original, Revision No. or Modification No.
2. All local area information in Section B: Area name and local contact information.
3. All requested company/workforce information in Section C: 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. All grant information in Section D*: RRSA grant type; total RRSA funds requested; amounts of grants funds (expressed in both total amounts and as a percentage of the total) for staff salaries/fringe, training services, supportive services, "other" costs (travel, supplies, supportive services, etc.); the average cost per participant (based on total grant amount); and average cost per training participant (based on the amount of grant funds budgeted specifically for training services); types of training to be undertaken, total participants, total training participants, a description of planned training activities and types of training.
5. A description of the Triggering Event in Section E: 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. A description of worker demographics and the barriers to their re-employment in Section F.
7. A description of the planned service strategy for targeted workers in Section G*: includes an outreach plan and schedule that is initiated within a two week period from the date of the individual's referral to the designated One-Stop Career Center and a service plan describing the types of services to be provided and a rationale for the planned number of participants to be served.

* 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 Sections D and G are as follows:

- Section D: Total RRSA Funds Requested and Requested Grant Period.

- Section G: Describe the elements to be covered by the proposed feasibility study.

Signature

Whether submitting an initial application or a request for modification, Section I must include the signature of either the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) chair or Executive Director (and date of signature).

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 a Budget and Budget Narrative are found in Attachment C.

Local Rapid Response Coordinator Completeness Review

Prior to official submission to the Division of Career Services (DCS) 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 D) attesting to the application package's completeness that is to be included as part of the official submission to DCS.

Application Submission

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

Ken Messina, Rapid Response Manager
Division of Career Services
Charles F. Hurley Building, 1st Floor
19 Staniford Street
Boston, MA 02114

NOTE 4: *Application packages may be submitted electronically to kmessina@detma.org followed by a hard copy with original signatures.*

Application Review Timeline and Notification

Each submitted Set-Aside Application will be reviewed by the DCS Rapid Response Set-Aside Committee comprised of five (5) voting DCS staff members. The Committee will review and act upon each application within a two (2) week time period from the date of the application's receipt. 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 intensive 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 the:

- Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator, and /or
- AFL-CIO Rapid Response Coordinator

NOTE 5: *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.*

Emergency Review Session

A local area may request an emergency session of the Set-Aside Committee by contacting the Rapid Response Manager and providing a compelling justification of the immediate need for Set-Aside funding. Approval of convening an emergency session of the Committee is at the sole discretion of the DCS Rapid Response Manager. The Rapid Response Manager may grant an emergency hearing to be held within five (5) business days only after the local area has submitted a complete Set-Aside application and sufficient justification that the standard two-week review period should be waived.

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.

It is the goal of the Commonwealth that email notification will be provided to the Local WIB within one week of the date of the application review. At that time, additional information and/or planning documents may be requested. The Local One-Stop 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.

NOTE 6: Funds may be awarded incrementally, based on specific performance criteria.

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. original total number of participants to be served,
7. prior modifications and amounts if relevant,
8. total expenditures to date,
9. unexpended obligations ,
10. total number of participants served to date,
11. total number of training participants to date,
12. amount of additional funds requested,
13. added number of participants to be served,
14. new total number of participants to be served if relevant,
15. new total number of participants to be trained if relevant, and
16. detailed explanation for the requested modification.

Grant Reporting Requirements

Program Reporting Requirements

Participant data for all funded projects will be entered in the Massachusetts One-Stop Employment System (MOSES). A career-center specific program will be developed for each grant for this purpose. As required by the DCS Statement of Work, participant tracking will be entered into the MOSES system and participant activity 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 ndisla-shannon@detma.org 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 WIA local allocation. Expenditures for RRSA funds will be tracked separately. Depending on the performance period proposed for the grant, an award may be made with either regular WIA Set-Aside funds or American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Set-Aside funds (to be awarded a Set-Aside grant using ARRA Set-Aside funds, the performance period may not extend beyond 6/30/2011).

A Fiscal Status Report (FSR) for each grant *must be submitted by the local fiscal agent electronically via the TAA/RR/NEG system, only. For grants funded with regular WIA Set-Aside funds, the FSR must be submitted no later than the 20th of each month. For grants funded with ARRA Set-Aside funds, the FSR must be submitted by the 10th of each month.*

NOTE 7: A Set-Aside award *will not* be made using a combination of both WIA regular and ARRA funds.

Hard copies of an FSR may be submitted only in the circumstance that a technical issue with the TAA/RR/NEG system prohibits electronic submittal.

Submit hard copies to: Elaine Joyce at ejoyce@detma.org or mail to Elaine at: Valley Works Career Center 192 Merrimack Street, Haverhill Mass, 01830.

As with electronic submission, all hard copy submittals must be received by DCS no later than the date appropriate to the particular source of Set-Aside funds (the 20th for regular WIA funds or the 10th for ARRA funds).

NOTE 8: 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 NEG, upon receipt of the NEG expended/obligated RRSA grant funds will be recaptured subsequent to the effective date of the NEG per the terms of the grant Statement of Work.