

Mass Workforce Issuance

Workforce Issuance No. 09-09

☐ Policy ☒ Information

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

cc: WIA State Partners

From: Michael Taylor, Director
Department of Workforce Development

Nancy Snyder, President/CEO
Commonwealth Corporation

Date: March 10, 2009

Subject: **USDOL/ETA Implementation Strategy for WIA and Wagner-Peyser Funding Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009**

Purpose: To transmit information regarding the broad implementation strategy envisioned by the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 as iterated in Training and Employment Notice No. 30-08, Overview of the Employment and Training Administration's Implementation Strategy for Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Funding Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (March 4, 2009) (Attachment A) and Training and Guidance Letter No. 13-08, Allotments for Training and Employment Services as Specified in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) for Activities under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), Workforce Investment Act Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Activities Program Allotments; Wagner-Peyser Act Allotments, and Reemployment Service (RES) Allotments (March 6, 2009) (Attachment B).

Background: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act) is intended to preserve and create jobs, promote economic recovery, and assist individual's most impacted by recession and significantly expands funding for ETA programs that include WIA Adults, Youth and Dislocated Workers and

Wagner-Peyser. The Recovery Act also provides funding for YouthBuild activities, and competitive grants for worker training and placement in high growth and emerging industry sectors.

ETA sees the Act as more than an infusion of added funding. It provides a unique opportunity for the workforce development system to advance its transformational efforts and demonstrate its full capacity to innovate and implement effective One-Stop service delivery. To that end ETA is strongly urging states and local areas to take an expansive view as to how the funds can be integrated into efforts to improve the effectiveness of the public workforce system. ETA envisions a system that values the needs of workers and employers equally in order to develop vital communities that nurture economic growth and shared prosperity.

All elements of the workforce system; adult and post-secondary education, job training, registered apprenticeship, career advancement and supportive service activities are aligned with economic and community development strategies to meet the skill needs of existing and emerging employers and high growth occupations as well as the needs of under-skilled workers. This seamless, dual-customer approach will make it easier for both adults and youth to advance as quickly as possible through progressive levels of education and job training.

ETA encourages states and local areas to adopt practices to advance this vision and intends to use a portion of the competitive grant funds as an incentive to develop innovative and effective approaches to delivering employment and training services.

Key features of ETA's vision of Recovery Act implementation include:

- *Transparency and Accountability* – Federal policies and procedures will be developed to ensure that all Americans understand how Recovery Act funds are being spent. ETA will develop reporting guidelines for performance and outcomes to be published in an upcoming TEGL. For added guidance, ETA anticipates providing TEGLs or other documents regarding: Policy and Planning, Participants and Performance Reporting, and Financial Reporting.
- *Expedited and Concurrent use of funds* – Recovery Act funds are intended to be spent concurrently with regular formula funds. Thus ETA expects services and training to be provided to a significantly greater number of individuals over the next 18 months. ETA is encouraging states to devise a local planning process that allows for effective and rapid use of funds.
- *Emphasis on Training and Innovative Delivery Strategies* – The Act places a strong emphasis on spending funds on services and training with administrative expenditures kept to a minimum.
- *Emphasis on Hard-to-Serve Populations and Needs-Related Payments* – The Act requires that priority for the use of WIA Adult funds shall be for services to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals. It also requires that supportive services and needs-related payments are available to support the employment and training needs of these priority populations.

Additionally, the Recovery Act identifies summer employment for youth as a use of WIA Youth formula funds. ETA strongly encourages states and local areas to use a significant portion of these funds to operate expanded summer youth employment opportunities during the summer of 2009 and to provide as many youth as possible with summer employment opportunities and other work experience outside of the summer months while ensuring high quality.

As cited above, ETA will provide specific guidance to the state for use of funds under the Recovery Act policy guidance is anticipated the week of March 16. Reporting guidance is scheduled to be published in late spring. In order to provide for the most effective use of Recovery Act funds by local regions, DCS will, accordingly publish forthcoming guidance with regard to (a) modification of current annual plans and (b) FY2010 plans.

The Commonwealth Corporation plans to release guidance for Massachusetts WIA youth programs on, or about March 31, 2009. The youth programs policy guidance will cover fiscal, programmatic and data tracking requirements for the youth program.

Commonwealth Corporation is soliciting field inquiries concerning the ARRA youth program in anticipation of developing targeted field guidance. Responses to submitted questions will be formulated and may be included in the associated Question and Answer (Q & A) section of the planned guidance. Questions from local youth program policy makers, operators and sub-recipients should be specifically addressed to Samuel Martin; Smartin@CommCorp.org.

In addition, Commonwealth Corporation will sponsor two statewide regional training sessions in early April for state partners. The training will incorporate the field guidance (including the associated Q & A) for the youth program.

Required: Please assure that all appropriate planning staff are knowledgeable, concerning the contents of this issuance.

Inquiries: As stated above, questions with regard to the youth program should be directed to Samuel Martin; Smartin@CommCorp.org; other inquiries regarding this issuance should be directed to Diane Hurley at Dhurley@detma.org.