COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

PRELIMINARY STRATEGIC PLAN
2013 - 2015

Rachel Kaprielian
Secretary
As the Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development, I have had the privilege of marshaling state resources and partnering with job seekers, businesses and other stakeholders across the state during one of the most difficult economic times in our state’s history. Employers across the state have described the significant challenges they face to stay competitive and weather economic uncertainty in order to simply stay open for business. Job seekers and employee advocates have expressed their interest in and frustration about getting back into and staying in the labor market.

The silver lining in the economic recession and resulting budget cuts have created a new opportunity to evaluate the way we all do business. The Executive Office is looking to streamline many of its core products and services to improve results during difficult economic times and moving forward.

We are retooling the statewide One-Stop Career Centers to find new ways of doing business that fit emerging industries in the 21st Century. This year we are working with our regional networks to implement the use of new technology tools, increase job seeker access to industry-based certificates and degrees, encourage co-location of services across partners to reduce costs and take a fresh look at service delivery practices statewide. Our goals are to better match employers with job seekers, increase job placement results for job seekers and increase the number of employers actively using One-Stop Career Centers to hire.

Protecting the rights, safety and health of our workforce is a critical issue, especially during lean economic times. Our labor agencies are working together to more efficiently allocate their resources while maintaining their mandates for oversight and enforcement of the Commonwealth’s wage, health and safety laws. They are striving to insure that employers, both public and private, as well as employees are effectively served.

Finally, our Secretariat is continuing its cross-agency work to stamp out fraudulent employment activities and level the playing field in order to increase fair business competition through the Joint Task Force on the Underground Economy and Employee Misclassification.

Looking forward, the Executive Office will focus its work on additional ways in which we can help drive economic recovery through effective and innovative public services. We invite you to participate in these efforts.

Rachel Kaprielian
Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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This document was prepared pursuant to Executive Order 540. This plan is subject to revisions and modifications following official release alongside the Fiscal Year 2014 Governor’s Budget Recommendation.

Please send feedback regarding this plan to jennifer.james@state.ma.us
VISION
EOLWD and its agencies are committed to developing a world-class, highly-skilled labor force to support business growth and innovation in the Commonwealth. We will achieve this vision through a network of highly effective services that attract, support and train the Massachusetts workforce while protecting the rights and safety of workers.

MISSION
To create, operate and oversee effective and innovative statewide services to: protect worker rights, health, safety, wages and working conditions; insure against job-related injury; provide individuals and families with economic stability following job loss or injury and illness; level the playing field for responsible employers; develop a pipeline of skilled workers for current, emerging and future employers; and, maintain labor harmony between employees, employers and labor unions.
OVERVIEW

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development were established by Governor Patrick on April 11, 2007. Led by Secretary Rachel Kaprielian, the office is responsible for oversight and implementation of worker safety, labor relations and workforce development services in the Commonwealth.

Labor Agencies:

- **Department of Labor Standards** - Promote and protect workers' safety and health, wages and working conditions, and to support employers and workers in the utilization of apprenticeship as a workforce development tool.
- **Department of Industrial Accidents** - Oversees the Workers' Compensation system in Massachusetts.
- **Department of Labor Relations** - Administers the Commonwealth’s collective bargaining statutes and protects the Commonwealth’s workers.

Workforce Agencies:

- **Department of Career Services** - Oversees the Commonwealth’s network of 33 One-Stop Career Centers that serve job seekers and businesses.
- **Department of Unemployment Assistance** - Administers the Unemployment Insurance program, providing temporary financial assistance to unemployed workers.
- **Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board** - Advises the Governor on building a workforce development system aligned with education policies and economic development goals.
- **Commonwealth Corporation** – A quasi-public agency whose programs and services build upward mobility pathways for Massachusetts youth and adults to prepare for high demand careers, in concert with state and regional partners.
The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) and its agencies achieved a variety of results for workers and businesses in the Commonwealth. Since 2007, highlights include the following:

**PROTECTING THE COMMONWEALTH’S WORKERS**

The Administration has put the health, safety, and rights of workers at the fore-front of our collective agenda. The Governor reestablished an Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and appointed the Commonwealth’s first Secretary of Labor in 16 years, elevating the concerns of working people to the highest levels of government and providing a voice for organized labor. EOLWD highlights include:

- The creation of the **Joint Task Force on the Underground Economy and Employee Misclassification** which has recovered **over $10 million in unpaid employer assessments and restitution to workers** unfairly denied compensation.

- Establishing the **Massachusetts Employee Safety and Health Advisory Committee** to increase occupational safety and health of the Commonwealth’s employees using a collaborative, joint labor-management approach to identifying and addressing workplace hazards.

- **Creating safer workplaces across the state**, the Secretariat and its agencies:
  - Enhanced **workplace safety through grants of over $2 million, covering 12,000 workers** for accident & illness prevention improvements.
  - Conducted 1,466 workplace site visits in FY2012, **identifying over 5,000 safety and health hazards**.
  - Stepped up capacity by ten-fold the number of **Stop Work Orders issued to businesses failing to carry workers compensation insurance** and a four-fold monthly increase in Stop Work order fines collected making the workplaces safer across the state.
• Doubled number of businesses checked monthly for compliance with over **33,400 field compliance checks completed and ensured that over 8,143 workers** are now covered by workers’ compensation insurance in fiscal year 2012.

**PROVIDING STABILITY FOR UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS**

• A “first responder” for workers experiencing layoffs in our state is our **statewide Rapid Response Team**. Since, 2007, the Team has responded to more than **97,000 displaced workers at 1,700+ businesses** throughout the state to provide unemployment insurance assistance, access to career services, health care information and support services to workers immediately following layoffs and plant closings often on-site at the employer. In addition, the Team works with the affected businesses to try to prevent layoffs and connect them to public resources to improve business results.

• In order to help stabilize individuals and families who experience job loss, the **Unemployment Insurance system delivered benefits to nearly 1,000,000 unemployed workers** over the last three years while undertaking a long term redesign of the Unemployment Insurance database system to modernize and increase system efficiency.

**JOB PLACEMENT AND CAREER SERVICES FOR WORKERS AND BUSINESSES**

• Last year alone (FY12), the **33 One-Stop Career Centers across the state provided services to more than 196,600 job seekers and 12,800 employers**. Within the 196,600 customers, more than 101,000 were UI claimants, over 11,000 were Veterans, and 11,000 were individuals with self-identified disabilities.

**INCREASING EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH**

As part of the Governor’s priority to reduce youth violence and improve educational and career pathways for youth, the Executive Office has implemented subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities for young people each year.

• In 2011, the **YouthWorks program operated with over $6.8M in FY11 and FY12 funding and provided employment to more than with 4,200 youths across the state** in its summer and year-round programs in 29 targeted cities. The Patrick-Murray Administration’s YouthWorks program leveraged available resources and created a 25% increased
participation rate over 2011’s targeted number of youth jobs. In the summer of 2011, 15% out of YouthWorks participants were high-risk youth: homeless; in foster care; or court-involved including DYS committed, on juvenile probation, or gang involved.

**CLOSING THE SKILLS GAP: EMPLOYER-BASED TRAINING**

A key priority for the Administration is to drive the use of public education and training resources to retrain workers to meet the hiring needs of employers. Two key programs support this goal, which have impacted hundreds of thousands of individuals and thousands of employers across the state.

- **The Workforce Training Fund** is a state-based program paid for by Massachusetts employers to provide resources to companies to train their incumbent workers. Created in 1998, the fund has awarded grants to **4,132 employers totaling nearly $214 million** to train **301,299 workers** to-date across the Commonwealth. This fund works to close the skills gap by providing resources to companies to develop the skills of their incumbent workforce.

- **The Workforce Competitive Trust Fund** is a unique tool funded through the Legislature to support industry-driven partnerships that design new education and training pathways to fill hiring demand for the participating employers. The Fund was recently recapitalized by the Administration and Legislature. **Since 2007, the $18M in funding through the program has:**
  - Developed **31 industry-lead training partnerships** across the state.
  - **229 Businesses** and **46 training and education organizations** were partners.
  - **6,751 individuals** were trained.
    - Of those, 4,858 earned a skill credential.
    - 5,459 experienced a positive employment outcome.
  - **Business participants documented improvements** in productivity, profitability, increased sales, employee retention, diversity, safety, communication skills and customer service ratings.
  - **More than $16M was leveraged in matching funds** from businesses, philanthropy and other sources.
Although the economy has improved and Massachusetts is recovering faster and stronger than most states, EOLWD continues to operate in a very challenging economic environment. As of October 2012, the Massachusetts economy recovered 93,700 jobs, or 66 percent, of the 143,000 jobs lost from January 2008 through November 2009. Four sectors have been the engine of job growth in the state during the recovery, (1) Professional, Scientific and Business Services; (2) Trade, Transportation & Utilities; (3) Education & Health Services; and (4) Leisure & Hospitality sectors. Massachusetts is well positioned to continue to grow jobs in the sectors that are driven by innovation and knowledge. The labor market continues to concentrate jobs in occupations that require technical skill and some post-secondary education beyond a high school diploma. However, a majority of unemployed individuals, including unemployment insurance claimants, have a high school diploma or less. In essence, there is an education and skill gap for a significant portion of our unemployment insurance claimants and for many of our long-term unemployed. The Commonwealth faces the challenge of retooling the skills of a large number of unemployed individuals for growing occupations that require technical skills and credentials.

One of Governor Patrick’s highest priorities is to strengthen the connection between the Massachusetts workforce system, our public education system (i.e. community colleges, vocational technical schools, K-12 etc.) and economic development agencies to ensure that the state has programs and pathways that are well-aligned with industry skill demand and present economic opportunity for unemployed and lower-skilled workers. The Secretaries of Labor and Workforce, Education, and Housing & Economic Development, and the Administration launched efforts to better align higher education and workforce services with the hiring needs of employers.

Like all other areas of state government, resources and capacity are strained. With a worsening federal budget, many of our programs that rely heavily on federal assistance could be faced with even fewer resources with which to operate. Given reduced federal
funding, the public workforce system continues to partner across state agencies and non-profit organizations in ways that better serve our collective customers – job seekers and employers.

Specifically, EOLWD is positioned to address the following key challenges:

- Contributing to the Commonwealth’s economic development efforts
- Protecting the health, safety and rights of workers
- Reemploying a significant number of unemployed individuals resulting from the recession
- Closing the gap between unfilled jobs and job seekers

These challenges also represent an opportunity for innovation and creativity to affect positive change across all agencies in EOLWD. To address these challenges, we are organizing our work through our strategic plan, which identifies the Secretariats key goals and implementation strategies. In addition, we are implementing a performance management program to address the mandated requirements set forth in Executive Order 540. Our performance management program will ensure we focus limited resources on agreed upon priorities and organize data and information around outcomes and results to track and guide our progress.

**SUPPORTING THE GOVERNOR’S PRIORITIES**

EOLWD plays a critical role in supporting Governor Patrick’s job creation priority as the primary Secretariat that addresses the “supply side” of the job creation equation through its various programs that provide skills training and job placement, and safe and attractive work environments. In addition, much of the data that is critical to measuring and monitoring changes in unemployment, job retention and job creation comes from or through EOLWD. The key goals, action steps and performance measures outlined in the section below were designed to support the Governor’s priorities, in particular increasing job creation, hiring, reemployment, and safe and productive work environments to help workers and businesses thrive.
STRATEGIC GOALS & ACTION STEPS

Economic Relief
Provide individuals and families with economic support following job loss through an effective and responsive unemployment insurance (UI) system

- Increase public awareness of UI benefits following job loss
- Operate an effective and responsive UI system to assist individuals following job loss
- Promote reemployment of Unemployment Insurance Claimants

To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for each goal:

- **Provide UI information** at time of layoff and reemployment services through the Rapid Response Team
- **Ensure UI benefits are paid timely**
- **Ensure UI benefits are paid accurately**
- **Provide excellent customer service to UI claimants and employers** through staff, training, and resources to handle a high volume of initial and continuing claims
- **Reduce/Eliminate fraud** in provision of unemployment insurance benefits
- **Safeguard the privacy of claimant and employer information** through increased security efforts
- **Connect UI claimants to reemployment services** at One Stop Career Centers
Maximize Job Placement & Hiring

Maximize job placement and business hiring through an effective and responsive workforce system

Increase the job placement rate for all One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) customers, including specific populations*, each year.

Increase the number of companies that hire individuals registered with the One-Stop Career Centers (OSCCs).

To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for each goal:

- **Redesign job seeker assessment and job matching services**, including the use of innovative software tools.
  - Implement Reemployment Assistance program
  - Implement TORQ tool (Transferable Occupation Relationship Quotient)
  - Implement real-time labor market information tool
  - Redesign JobQuest with new social media capacity and microsites
- **Align skill sets of unemployed with job openings** to increase hire rates (see goal below)
- **Maximize workforce services across federal and state programs** (e.g. Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Transitional Assistance etc.) to increase outcomes for job seekers
  - Require joint regional planning across government agencies in FY14
- **Redesign Business Services** through OSCCs
- **Identify hiring/demands skills needed by growth sectors** to match against OSCC candidates
- Work with local areas to collaboratively **strengthen employer engagement** through a statewide strategic plan
- **Develop or improve collaborations among all entities** providing services for Massachusetts businesses

*Examples of specific populations include veterans, individuals with disabilities, dislocated workers, low-income, people with <12 years education etc.*
To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for each goal:

- Increase education and training resources for unemployed individuals through federal Workforce Investment Act funding.

- Increase Basic Reading and Math Skills of One-Stop Career Center customers (with HS diploma or less) through national assessment and remediation program (i.e. Career Readiness Credential).

- Increase Industry Specific Skills of workers:
  - Increase portion of training and retraining resources targeting high demand occupations and sectors through federal resources e.g. WIA, NEGs, TRADE etc.
  - Increase the utilization of apprenticeship, in particular minority and women apprentices, in high-demand sectors and occupations.
  - Increase the number of supported “regional workforce partnerships” to meet business hiring needs.

- Increase number of incumbent workers trained in high demand sectors or occupations through Workforce Training Fund Program.
To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for each goal:

- **Provide job readiness services** for youth through the One-Stop Career Centers.
- **Tools to support mock interviews**, video learning, and resume development etc.
- **Provide access to youth employment permit applications** in multiple languages and bolster website content for teen worker safety information.
- **Increase job placements through state-funded YouthWorks program** to provide summer work experience and prepare the teens to compete for unsubsidized jobs.
- **Coach teens** on how to successfully find employment.
- **Develop private sector employer engagement strategy**.
- **Consider innovative strategies that may engage staffing agencies**.
- **Strengthen connections to youth-serving organizations** and employers.
- **Recruit both subsidized and unsubsidized youth jobs** through One-Stop Career Center Business Service Representative (BSR) staff.
- **Design and fund programs** that offer occupational training, career exploration and/or transitional employment for DYS youth.
To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for each goal:

- **Protect Workers**
  
  Promote and protect **workers' safety, health, wages and working conditions**

1. **Increase employer awareness of wage regulations in order to promote compliance**
2. **Raise workplace safety awareness in order to reduce workplace injury and illness in the public sector**
3. **Reduce workplace injury and illness in the private sector through collaboration with employers**
4. **Reduce occupational exposure to asbestos and lead**
5. **Ensure that workers placed in jobs by temporary staffing agencies are afforded their rights under the new Temporary Worker Right to Know Law**

### STRATEGIC GOALS & ACTION STEPS

- **Amend the minimum wage regulations** to clarify the legislative intent of the wage laws so that employers will better understand their obligations and employees will better understand their rights.

- **Administer Executive Order 511 Establishing the Massachusetts Employee Safety & Health Advisory Committee** to increase occupational safety for state workers.

- **Devise a plan for preventing workplace injuries and reducing injury costs for public sector workers**, including technical assistance, educational outreach, and site surveys to state agencies and municipalities with most injuries.

- **Provide consultation service to help employers** recognize and control potential safety and health hazards at their worksites, improve their safety and health program, and assist in training employees.

- **Expand Workplace Safety Grants** through enhanced strategic outreach program to improve geographic diversity of grantees.

- **Refer companies discovered through worksite investigations to Workplace Safety Grant program** to expand number of employers applying.

- **Focus inspection resources on suspected high exposure-risk schools** for compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) “asbestos in schools” regulations.

- **Collaborate with community partners in public health, housing, and the building trades, to raise awareness** of the Department of Labor Standards Lead Safe Renovation Regulations.

- **Promulgate regulations and administer the new Temp Worker Right to Know Law** in a manner that protects workers’ rights while simultaneously providing appropriate compliance assistance for MA temporary staffing agencies.
To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for each goal:

- **Lower administrative cost by 3-5% per year** that will contribute to lowering the employer assessment rates
- **Achieve 90% final disposition** of all Department of Industrial Accidents (DIA) cases received within 7 months of initial filing
- **Achieve a 100% goal that all cases receive a final disposition** within 12 months, by the year 2017
- **Increase by 10,000, over the next five years, the number of employers who provide worker’s compensation insurance** by educational outreach and stop work orders
- **Increase by 25,000, over the next five years, the number of MA workers covered by workers’ compensation insurance** by educational outreach and stop work orders
To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for this goal:

- **Increase education, coordination and enforcement of the state’s labor, licensing, and tax laws** through the work of the Underground Economy Task Force
- **Increase revenue recovery** through enforcement by inspection, audit, and information-sharing
- **Level the playing field for employers** by publicizing Task Force enforcement successes that will serve as a deterrent to cutting corners on labor, licensing, and tax laws
- **Estimate the frequency of employee misclassification and underground economic activity** among the Commonwealth’s industries through the undertaking of a research study
To deliver these results, EOLWD and the Department of Labor Relations will take the following actions for each goal:

- **Institute pilot impact analysis system to prioritize cases for unfair labor practice adjudication** based on relative impact on the public. Level 1 Cases are those assessed with greatest urgency and impact on the public if unresolved. Level 2 Cases are those assessed as less urgent.
  - **Level I Cases:**
    - Investigations will occur within 14 to 45 days from filing
    - If Complaint Issues: Scheduled for hearing within three to six months of the Complaint
  - **Level II Cases:**
    - Investigations will occur within 30 and 90 days from the filing date
    - If Complaint Issues: Scheduled for hearing within six months to a year of Complaint

- **Cross-utilize mediators to process all mediation cases** (JLMC, DLR, contract and unfair labor practice investigations) and more efficiently assign and track cases through geographic assignments and central reporting. Institute a more rigorous timeline for these cases with stricter reporting expectations.
  - Implement procedures to more effectively track troubled cities and towns before labor relations breakdown

- **Institute electronic filing and more efficiently use current technologies** to track and identify case delays
To deliver these results, EOLWD will take the following actions for this goal:

- **Lead the development of new labor market and workforce information, products, and tools** that describe employment change over time and hiring demand
- **Develop a new state of the art Labor Market Information (LMI) website** for the Commonwealth that provides immediate access to products, data, tools, and information in users’ preferred formats, geographies, and time frames
- **Develop tools and products that integrate real-time demand and supply information** with traditional information and products to provide more responsive information to users for their current needs
- **Expand partnerships within Massachusetts and with other states to produce more current industry and occupational supply and demand information** to help guide strategic planning and service deliveries for the workforce investment system and partner agencies
- **Produce timely labor market trend products that provide regional and state information** on labor force, labor market demand and pipeline supply and disseminate through regional meetings
- **Disseminate best practices** in workforce development to practitioners in the field
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<td>Complaint</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Measure: % within time frame</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level II Cases:</td>
<td>Sub-goal: Investigations will occur within 30 and 90 days from the filing date</td>
<td>DLR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Measure: % within time frame</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-goal: (If Complaint Issued) Scheduled for hearing within six months to a year of Complaint</td>
<td>DLR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Measure: % within time frame</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Version Date: January 14th 2013