

MASSACHUSETTS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

# Mass Workforce Issuance

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Policy

Information

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**To:** Chief Elected Officials  
Workforce Development Board Chairs  
Workforce Development Board Directors  
Title I Administrators  
Career Center Directors  
Title I Fiscal Officers  
DCS Operations Managers

**cc:** WIOA State Partners

**From:** Alice Sweeney, Director  
Department of Career Services

**Date:** November 3, 2017

**Subject:** **Hiring Workers from Puerto Rico**

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**Purpose:** To notify Local Workforce Development Boards, One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce partners that the labor and employment field is highly regulated in Puerto Rico. There are numerous statutes, regulations and judicial doctrines, as well as several constitutional provisions, which govern this matter. The topics generally cover the start of operations, the hiring of employees, wage and hour issues, employment discrimination and retaliation, leaves of absence, individual rights, welfare benefits, labor law and union matters, and employment termination.

**Background:** Companies looking to hire workers from Puerto Rico must comply with Public Law 87. It requires employers who are recruiting on the island to obtain authorization by the Secretary of Labor and Human Resources of Puerto Rico. According to the statute, in general terms, those who wish to contract the services of migrant workers will have to formalize a written contract with the persons to be recruited, including certain requirements established by the corresponding regulation. Employers must provide workers with contracts in English and Spanish.

A violation of these provisions is punishable as a misdemeanor. For more information, contact Carlos Roman at the Employment Service Division of the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources (787-625-3137, ext. 2300 or [croman@trabajo.pr.gov](mailto:croman@trabajo.pr.gov)).

## Action

**Requested:** Please share the information with staff and partners as appropriate.