Program Year 2017
Annual Report

WIOA Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth
WIOA Title III: Wagner-Peyser Employment Service

January 1, 2019

Submitted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

to the U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Introduction

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) is the state level agency responsible for the oversight of the workforce development funding received through the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA). The MassHire Department of Career Services and Commonwealth Corporation are designated by EOLWD to implement specific initiatives related to the workforce development system.

Since the implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, Massachusetts has adopted a statewide strategy to maximize and leverage workforce development resources through our 16 MassHire Workforce Boards and 29 MassHire Career Centers. In Massachusetts, MassHire Career Centers provide the cornerstone of service delivery for job development and job search assistance, occupational training for growth industries and occupations, business services to fill talent and skill needs, layoff aversion, and related employer-support strategies. The goal is to ensure coordinated delivery of information and services throughout the Commonwealth.

A. PY2017 Summary of Statewide Program Performance

State performance goals for Program Year 2017 (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018) were established with the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA). Funds supporting program services during this period were WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program grant funds and Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Service grant funds provided through an annual allotment from DOLETA. PY2017 performance covers adults, dislocated workers, and youth who exited these programs between July 2016—June 2017, and job seekers who received services between July 2017 and June 2018.

The four primary federal performance measures—employed in the second quarter after exit, employed in the fourth quarter after exit, median earnings in the second quarter after exit, and credential attainment—measure employment, earnings outcomes, and credential attainment through the four quarters after a participant has exited (received a final service). The data come from quarterly wage records reported by employers as well as information provided by career center staff. The measures show the percent employed during the second and fourth quarters after exit, the median earnings in the second quarter after exit and the credential attainment rate (Title I only) for those who received training services.

Participants exited program services into a very positive economic climate. Charts 1 and 2 below show the unemployment rates and nonfarm employment levels for Massachusetts for the period from January 2016 through July 2018.

For the period in which participants exited, the unemployment rate remained below 4.0% and employment expanded by 96,000 jobs or 2.7% between July 2016 and June 2018.

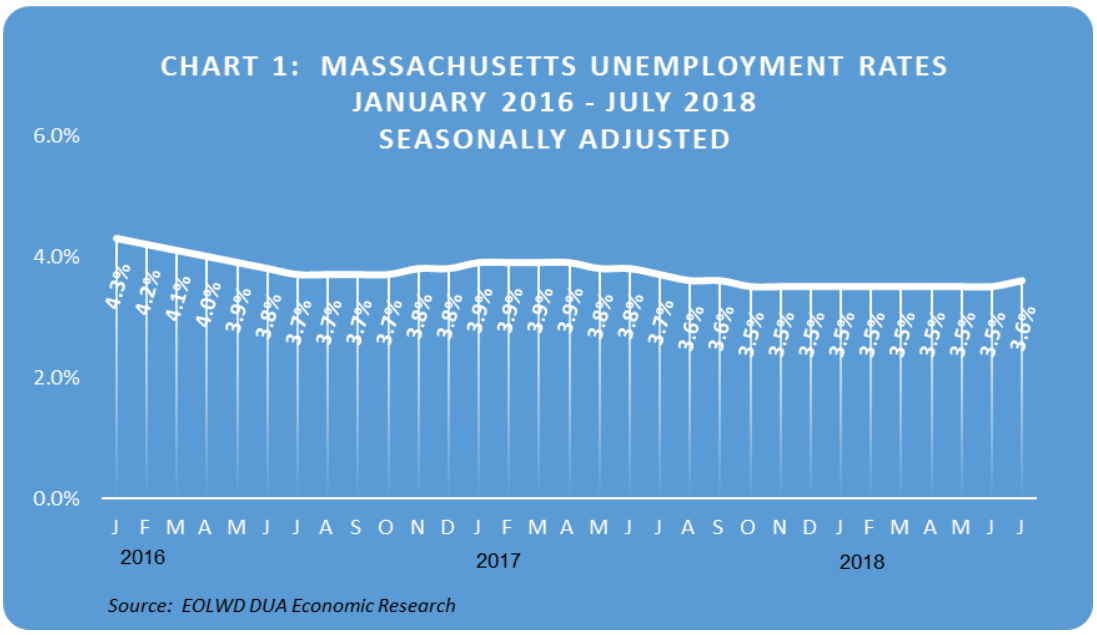


CHART 1: MASSACHUSETTS UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
JANUARY 2016 - JULY 2018
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED
6.0%
4.0%
2.0%
0.0%
4.3% 4.2% 4.1% 4.0% 3.9% 3.8% 3.7% 3.7% 3.7% 3.7% 3.8% 3.8% 3.9% 3.9% 3.9% 3.9% 3.8% 3.8% 3.7% 3.6% 3.6% 3.5% 3.5% 3.5% 3.5% 3.5% 3.5% 3.5% 3.5% 3.6%
J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J
2016
2017
2018
Source: EOLWD DUA Economic Research

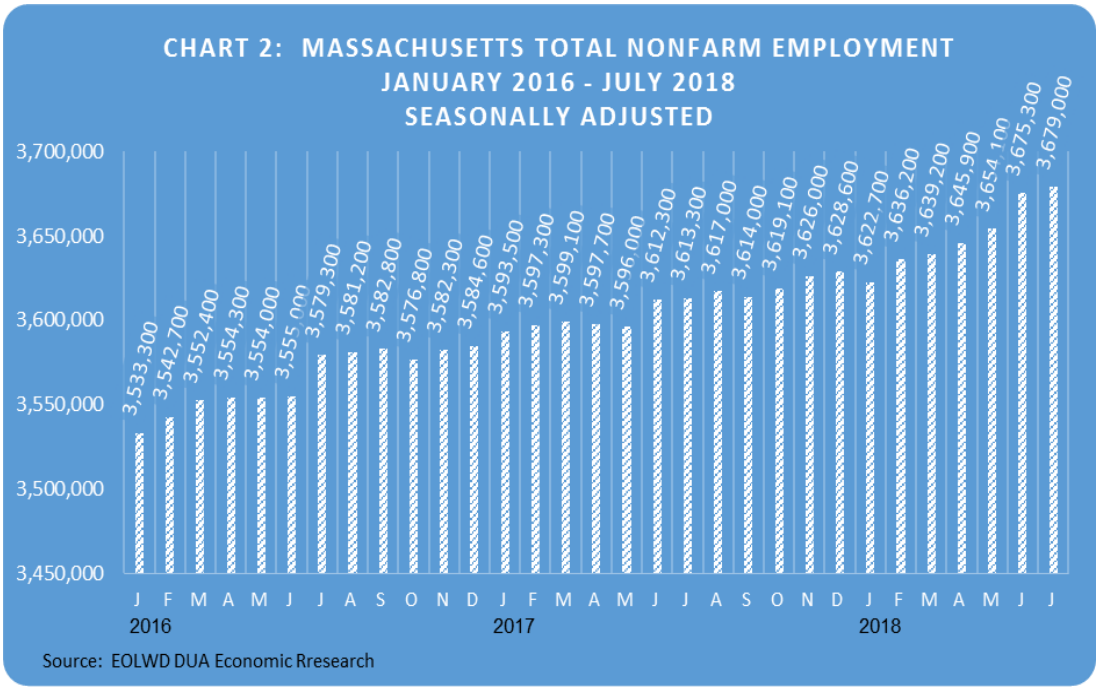


CHART 2: MASSACHUSETTS TOTAL NONFARM EMPLOYMENT
JANUARY 2016 - JULY 2018
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED
3,700,000
3,650,000
3,600,000
3,550,000
3,500,000
3,450,000
3,533,300 3,542,700 3,552,400 3,554,300 3,554,000 3,555,000 3,579,300 3,581,200 3,582,800 3,576,800 3,582,300 3,584,600 3,593,500 3,597,300 3,599,100 3,597,700 3,596,000 3,612,300 3,613,300 3,617,000 3,614,000 3,619,100 3,626,000 3,628,600 3,622,700 3,636,200 3,639,200 3,645,900 3,654,100 3,675,300 3,679,000
J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J
2016
2017
2018
Source: EOLWD DUA Economic Rresearch

approved by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA). Tables 1-4 below display the negotiated goal, actual state performance, and percent of goal attained.

Table 1: Title I Adult Program

Measure	Negotiated goal	Actual performance	Percent of goal
Employment Rate Q2	86.0%	74.6%	86.7%
Employment Rate Q4	78.0%	73.5%	94.2%
Median Earnings Q2	$5,200	$6,265	120.0%
Credential Attainment	69.0%	75.5%	109.5%

Table 2: Title I Dislocated Worker Program

Measure	Negotiated goal	Actual performance	Percent of goal
Employment Rate Q2	86.0%	81.6%	94.9%
Employment Rate Q4	85.0%	81.1%	95.4%
Median Earnings Q2	$7,600	$9,483	129.5%
Credential Attainment	55.0%	77.2%	140.4%

Table 3: Title I Youth Program

Measure	Negotiated goal	Actual performance	Percent of goal
Employment/Education Rate Q2	81.0%	77.5%	96.3%
Employment/Education Rate Q4	73.0%	82.1%	112.5%
Credential Attainment	70.5%	54.1%	76.8%

Table 4: Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Service

Measure	Negotiated goal	Actual performance	Percent of goal
Employment Rate Q2	64.0%	65.0%	101.6%
Employment Rate Q4	62.0%	69.0%	111.3%
Median Earnings Q2	$5,500	$7,119	129.4%

B. Research and Evaluation

Field Capacity Building to Support Sector Strategies

Commonwealth Corporation supported efforts to build regional sector partnerships by convening and facilitating learning communities, sharing best practices and capacity building.

With EOLWD, Commonwealth Corporation administers the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF), which supports the development of sectoral employment programs—industry-specific workforce development programs that prepare unemployed and under-employed individuals for skilled in-demand positions. WCTF has invested in more than 60 projects designed by industry sector partnerships. Lessons learned have resulted in the following technical assistance resources to assist the workforce system with sector strategies. commcorp.org/programs/workforce-competitiveness-trust-fund-wctf/.

- *Sector Program Design Approach Tool* which outlines the 10 major steps necessary to design a sector strategy program partnership.

- *Employer Engagement Assessment Tool* and *Building Your Employer Engagement Strategy: Determining Employer/Business Needs and Assets* are tools to support workforce boards and organizations in establishing a partnership and ensuring they have all the partners necessary for a sector program to be successful.

- *WCTF: Short Term Solutions, Long Term Impact* is a summary of the investments and outcomes of WCTF-supported programs designed to train and place workers in manufacturing positions. It is intended to give workforce practitioners a resource to engage in discussions with employers and other stakeholders about how the sectoral model works for both employers and community residents who need access to and preparation for job opportunities.

Other activities to support businesses and workforce development professionals included:

- In October 2017, a *Manufacturing Day Workforce Strategies Live Twitter Chat* was hosted by CommCorp to engage employers and workforce practitioners in a dialogue about effective practices in training and recruiting skilled workers.

- In April 2018, a live Twitter chat was hosted on *Barriers to Employment for Unemployed and Underemployed People with Disabilities*, engaging workforce practitioners and employers to share best practices and advice related to tapping into this labor pool. commcorp.org/blog/untapped-labor-pool-employing-people-disabilities/.

- In May 2018, a presentation was made on *Best Practices in Employer Engagement in Workforce Development Programs* at the Commonwealth's annual Economic Development Summit.

- In May 2018, a workshop on *Engaging Employers in Program Design and Delivery* was held at the Commonwealth Workforce Coalition's annual conference to assist workforce development practitioners design programs that are aligned with employers' demand for skilled workers.

- In May 2018, in partnership with JobsFirstNYC, a webinar was hosted on *Employer Solutions to Recruitment & Retention Challenges in a Tight Labor Market*. The webinar included research by JobsFirstNYC on the impact of online applications and embedded personality assessments in screening out individuals who are likely good candidates for positions. CommCorp presented on various models designed to help businesses be successful in hiring and retaining workers and to help workers be successful in managing work and life responsibilities. Workforce system professionals from Massachusetts and throughout Region I attended the webinar. commcorp.org/blog/exploring-new-models-for-recruitment-and-retention-in-a-tight-labor-market/.

- CommCorp has begun working with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston on a research initiative to understand the challenges businesses in the Commonwealth are facing related to improving job design, primarily for low-wage workers. This work is an outgrowth of CommCorp's collaboration with the Aspen Institute and its job quality initiative. In partnership with EOLWD and the Federal Reserve Bank, CommCorp conducted interviews and focus groups with businesses in fall 2018 in order to understand these challenges in more depth.

Sharing Health Care Industry Workforce Trends

Commonwealth Corporation provided opportunities for health care employers and workforce practitioners, including career center and workforce board staff, to share and learn about effective workforce practices and health care workforce trends.

The *Act Improving the Quality of Health Care and Reducing Costs through Increased Transparency, Efficiency, and Innovation* (Massachusetts Chapter 224) established the Health Care Workforce Transformation Fund. Commonwealth Corporation, on behalf of EOLWD, funded planning projects to support employers and health care organizations in identifying the workforce challenges associated with the law. Subsequently training programs were funded to meet the training needs of a variety of clinical and non-clinical health positions, especially the skills needed by front-line workers. The major focus areas were primary care practice transformation, community health workers, clinicians, and advanced practitioners, behavioral/mental health integration and certified nursing assistants.

In December 2017, the *Health Care Workforce Transformation Fund (HCWTF) Training Grants: Outcomes Summary* report was released summarizing the outcomes of the 59 training grants. The document highlights the number and variety of health care employers engaged in training, the number of incumbent workers trained, placement wages for pipeline training programs, and business impact metrics reported by grantees. In addition, there were 12 case studies published with health care providers that highlight their business challenge, training solution and impact metrics. The report and case studies can be found at commcorp.org/programs/health-care-grants/.

In November 2017, a series of reports were released, based on findings from health care research for the Office of the State Auditor as directed by Chapter 224. The research was conducted by Commonwealth Corporation in partnership with the Center for Labor Markets and Policy at Drexel University. The following reports can be found at commcorp.org/blog/massachusetts-health-care-workforce-changing/.

- *Selected Health Care Support and Direct Care Occupations in Massachusetts*
- *Characteristics of Workers and Jobs in the Massachusetts Health Care Industry*
- *Developments in Certificate and Degree Completions in Health Care Fields of Study*
- *Health Care Employment, Structure and Trends in Massachusetts*
- *Mass Layoffs in the Health Care Industry in Massachusetts, 2004-2016*
- *Profiles of Fifteen High Growth Health Occupations in Massachusetts*

In January 2018, CommCorp held an event titled: *Facing the Future of Care: Innovations in Recruitment and Retention of Home Care Workers*. The event focused on changes in the health care workforce in Massachusetts, particularly the substantial increase in occupations involved with delivering care to individuals in their homes. Workforce professionals were invited to share the work they are undertaking with employers to try to solve some of the challenges home care workers and employers are facing, including unpredictable schedules, transportation access, and benefit cliff effects. Visit commcorp.org/blog/event-recap-facing-future-care/ to learn more.

In February 2018, CommCorp collaborated with staff from the Department of Public Health to offer a workshop for career center and workforce board Directors on the emerging occupation of Recovery Coaches, including the growing demand for their services and the role of Recovery Coaches in supporting individuals in recovery from substance use disorders.

In June 2018, in partnership with the Department of Public Health, CommCorp held a *Substance Use and Addictions Workforce Forum* with Secretary Acosta to provide nearly 100 workforce development professionals, educators, and substance use and addictions recovery providers from across the state with information about the demand and training requirements for substance use/addiction-treatment workers. The event was designed to help participants meet their counterparts in their region and begin to discuss how they might work together to support and grow this critical workforce. Visit commcorp.org/blog/event-recap-forum-offers-latest-information-about-training-and-demand-for-substance-use-and-addictions-workforce-in-massachusetts/ to learn more.

Disseminate Research on Youth Employment Trends

CommCorp has been conducting follow-up research related to youth employment and its *Signaling Success: Boosting Teen Employment Prospects* study. This research was conducted in two parts. The first part focused on the skills, credentials and behaviors that businesses look for in making promotion decisions as well as their promotion strategies. The second part focused on the perceptions that 17-24 year-old workers have on the career pathways in major industries and the resources that they use to make career decisions. During PY2017 the research findings were finalized and published, as well as two resources to support businesses and youth-serving organizations in preparing young adult workers for career advancement.

Promoting Success: What it Takes to Move Beyond an Entry-Level Job explores what are the skills that workers need to do to get promoted. Based on research with youth and employers, the report reviews the skills, knowledge and behaviors businesses are seeking in entry-level workers for them to be considered for advancement. *Promoting Success* offers insights and tools for employers and workforce development professionals to help young adult workers in entry-level jobs take advantage of advancement opportunities. The findings have been presented at a series of statewide and regional meetings and the DOL Region 1 office has disseminated the report to youth-serving stakeholders. Visit commcorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Promoting-Success_Final.pdf.

Two companion resources were published on how to prepare young workers and entry-level workers to navigate their careers and prepare themselves for advancement opportunities. *Promoting Success: Tips for Youth Organizations* uses data from interviews with young people and from a survey of over 200 employers to provide tips and recommendations to support the work of youth organizations in preparing young workers and entry-level workers for their future careers. commcorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Resources_Promoting-Success_Tips-for-Youth-Organizations_Final.pdf. *Promoting Success: Tips for Employers* is based on findings from the business phase of the research in the form of tips and best practices for businesses on developing entry-level talent, for programs that serve young workers, and for entry-level employees themselves. commcorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Resources_Promoting-Success_Tips-for-Employers_Final.pdf .

Expand Youth Access to Soft Skills

Signal Success is a comprehensive curriculum designed and tested by education and workforce development partners to help young people develop essential skills for future success. Students receive systematic instruction in core soft skills while engaging in meaningful future planning. Commonwealth Corporation continues to develop strategies for expanding *Signal Success* to additional sites including high schools and community colleges. (signalsuccess.org/)

Working with the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) and EOLWD, plans have been developed to roll out *Signal Success* to WIOA Youth providers, especially those that are working with Older Age youth. CommCorp has collaborated with five workforce regions to get input to design a customized version and to plan for the implementation of the *Signal Success* pilot in PY2018.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has contracted with CommCorp through an ISA with EOLWD to pilot a customized, 10-module version of *Signal Success* in the High Quality College and Career Pathways (HQCCP) high schools and the Innovation Pathways schools. The Clean Energy Center (CEC) has expanded its implementation of customized *Signal Success* curriculum to additional high schools through its *Learn and Earn* initiative.

Signal Success in Action: Expanding College and Career Readiness in Schools summarizes the successes of the curriculum at three schools that were early adopters of the curriculum. The brief can be found at commcorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Resources_Signal-Success-Two-Pager_Schools.pdf.

Note: The projects discussed above were supported with WIOA Governor's Reserve funding.

C. Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction was assessed through a survey of participants and employers served under WIOA Title I programs and Wagner-Peyser. Massachusetts anticipates that implementation of MassHire as the unifying brand across the workforce system will be reflected in higher response rates and higher satisfaction levels from both program participants and employers in the future.

Results from 265 surveys (3,746 participants were requested to complete the survey) completed by program participants who received services provided at MassHire Career Centers statewide showed the following results.

Category	Rating
Overall Satisfaction	83%
Met Expectations	74%
Comparison to Ideal	72%

Results from 79 surveys (1,333 employers were requested to complete the survey) completed by employers who received services provided at MassHire Career Centers statewide showed the following results.

Category	Rating
Overall Satisfaction	75%
Met Expectations	73%
Comparison to Ideal	70%

D. Waivers

Under the Secretary's authority to waive certain requirements of WIOA Title I, Subtitles A, B, and E, and sections 8-10 of the Wagner-Peyser Act in WIOA section 189(i), Massachusetts applied for a waiver of WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720 (b) in order to increase on-the-job training (OJT) employer reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

The Department approved the Commonwealth's waiver request through June 30, 2020 for the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth formula funds.

The higher reimbursement rate provides an incentive for increased employer participation in On-the-Job Training and expands employer involvement with the State's workforce system, particularly among small- and medium-sized businesses. The waiver also encourages enhanced capacity and relationship building among a region's business, education and workforce development communities as a means of focusing resources on emerging skill acquisition and sustainability.

E. National Dislocated Worker Grants

National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) temporarily expand the service capacity of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Dislocated Worker training and employment programs by providing funding assistance in response to large, unexpected economic events that cause significant job losses.

During Program Year 2017, Massachusetts operated 10 NDWG projects with total funding of $13,226,915, providing reemployment services, including occupational training to over 2,000 workers, dislocated from 23 companies.

Additionally, Massachusetts received a disaster-relief DWG to serve victims of Hurricanes Irma and Maria who fled to Massachusetts due to the impact of those hurricanes. MassHire Career Centers have enrolled over 1,500 evacuees; the Disaster DWG has, to date, enrolled 385 individuals for grant-supported reemployment services, including ESOL and occupational training.

National Dislocated Worker Grant Projects Operating During PY2017				
NDWG	**Local operator**	**Award amount**	**Planned number of participants**	**Companies**
Sector Partnership	Hampden	$3,277,190	323	5 Regional Manufacturing - Statewide
MVME Mfg.	Lawrence	$933,311	150	Yoplait, Greencore, Ryder
Greater Lowell Multi-Company	City of Lowell	$1,040,264	110	A.H. Notini & Sons, Inc., Courier Westford, Inc., Cobham Sensor Systems
Hiliner Symmetry	New Bedford	$784,648	138	High Liner Foods, Symmetry Medical
GE (Dual Enrollment)	Brockton	$1,337,486	150	New England Art Publisher, General Electric Oil & Gas
Retail Tech	Cambridge (Metro North) and Norwood (Metro South West)	$2,563,689	400	EMC, BOSE, Gannett Publishing, Staples HQ
Garber	Brockton	$469,087	70	Garber Brothers
Polartec	Lawrence	$933,311	150	Polartec
Brayton Point	Bristol	$221,591	68	Brayton Point Power Plant
Garelick	North Shore	$803,501	130	Garelick Farms
Hurricane Response Disaster Relief DWG	Hampden	$862,837	300	Disasters: Hurricanes Irma and Maria

F. Apprenticeships

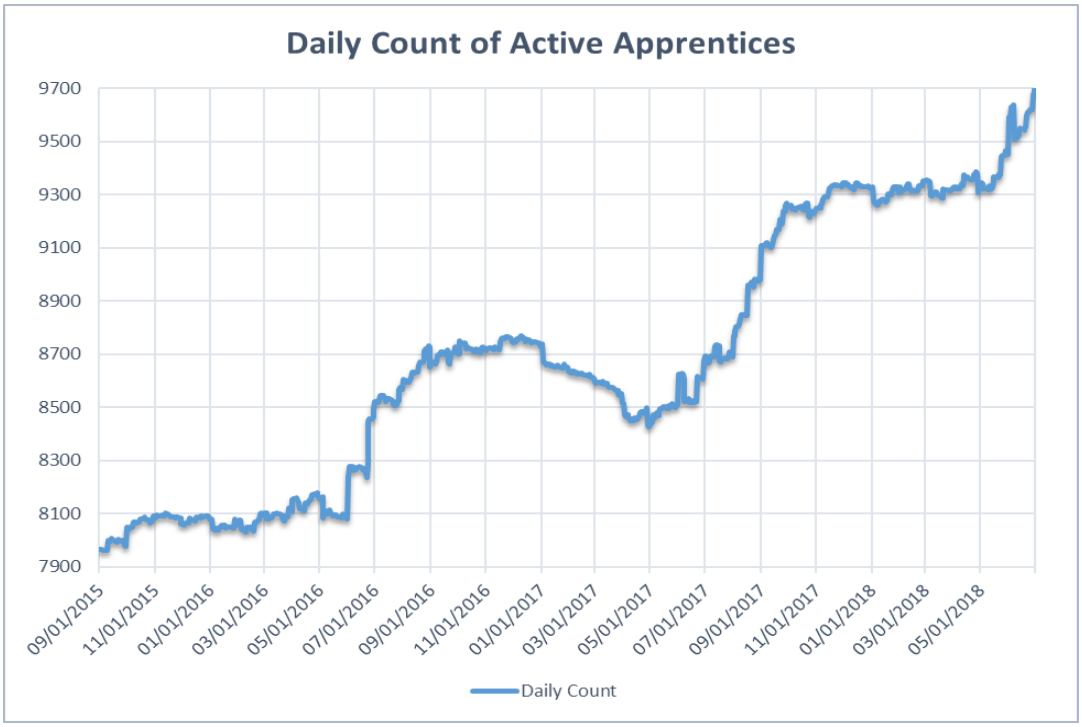
In July 2017, the Massachusetts Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) first convened the Apprenticeship Advisory Group in order to inform the development of a strategic plan for expansion of Registered Apprenticeships (RA) in Massachusetts. The Apprenticeship Advisory Group included representatives from union and non-union organizations and employers, community-based organizations, educational institutions, legislators, the public workforce development system, government agencies, and other key stakeholders.

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development also partnered with several industry organizations in order to convene roundtables and gather feedback from the business community. Businesses were convened by the Associated Industries of Massachusetts, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council, and the Employer Association of New England. Individual conversations regarding Apprenticeship education and expansion were also held with employers from healthcare, technology, and manufacturing sectors.

The input of these stakeholders, along with extensive research conducted by EOLWD and its partners culminated in the development of a detailed strategic plan. The plan demonstrates the commitment to diversifying the Registered Apprentice workforce and expanding apprenticeships to new occupations and industries.

As of March 2018, there were 9,502 Registered Apprentices in Massachusetts. The majority—89%—were in construction or building trade occupations. Public safety occupations made up another 6%, dispensing occupations 4%, and line erectors 1%. Less than 1% of the state's RA programs are for new occupations, such as diesel and auto mechanics, housekeepers, machinists, counselors, and healthcare occupations. The majority of apprentices were white and male: 9% female; 10% black; 8% Hispanic/Latino; 1.5% Asian-American/Pacific Islander; 2% with a disability, and 9% Veterans.

The Chart below represents the growth trend in Registered Apprentices since September 2015.



Apprenticeship Expansion in Massachusetts: Strategic Plan

In June 2018, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development issued *Apprenticeship Expansion in Massachusetts: Strategic Plan*, in partnership with the Apprenticeship Advisory Group. This comprehensive plan set forth a multi-year agenda and identified specific goals and targets. Within the EOLWD secretariat, the Division of Apprentice Standards (DAS), under the Department of Labor Standards, and the MassHire Department of Career Services work closely together to apply for funding and to support and expand apprenticeship opportunities across the Commonwealth.

Simultaneously, EOLWD/MDCS applied for grant funding under the American Apprenticeship Act to increase the number and diversity of apprenticeships in the Commonwealth.

DOL-funded Apprenticeship Grants awarded to EOLWD/MDCS Total funds: $6,516,648

Grant name	Value	Anticipated outcomes	To date (12/31/18)	Projected activity
American Apprenticeship Initiative-AAI	$2,999,999	Enroll 300 Apprentices	Enrolled 101 apprentices • 31 pre-apprentices • 15 employers • 11 occupations/ programs	Two large healthcare employers, two large manufacturing employers, an Industry intermediary, and employer members engage to provide programs across approximately 10 new programs.
Apprenticeship Accelerator Grant	$200,000	Staff to focus on Employer and Stakeholder Engagement	Individual works with employers and professional groups, such as the Massachusetts Restaurant Association and National Association of Insurance Professionals to develop Registered Apprenticeship programs across non-traditional industries and occupations.	Continue to engage employers and professional groups, to develop RA programs across non-traditional industries and occupations. Coordinate with operators on the MAI and MAE grants to fund RTI for new RA programs.
State Apprenticeship Expansion	$3,316,649	Increase the number of apprentices enrolled in Massachusetts by 15%	Enrolled 76 apprentices across 12 employers and 10 new occupation and programs.	• Subject matter experts in each of three priority industries to provide technical assistance across the state to potential RA sponsors. • Planning Grants for development of High School pre-apprentice to apprentice programs. • Redesign the DAS website to include an e-commerce component allowing for a more streamlined process for sponsors and apprentices. • Market new Registered Apprenticeship Tax Credit.

Massachusetts Line Item to Support Registered Apprenticeship:

The FY19 Massachusetts state budget and economic development bill includes a $500,000 line item to support the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs in priority industries.

- $300,000 will be provided in competitive grants to sponsors to defray the cost of related technical instruction in new programs within the priority industries of Tech, Manufacturing, and Healthcare.

- $200,000 will be provided in competitive "apprenticeship innovation" planning grants. The grant funding will be used to support the following components of the Apprenticeship Expansion Plan:

    1. Pre-Apprenticeship standards and pipelines
       EOLWD will select one organization to review and align existing pre-apprenticeship standards and programs within the Division of Apprentice Standards across priority industries, at a minimum.

    2. Build sponsor capacity and expertise
       EOLWD will select 1-2 organizations to act as a statewide intermediary or "sponsor network" for companies in 1) healthcare and 2) advanced manufacturing to develop and manage Registered Apprenticeship models on behalf of individual companies.

    3. Challenge Grants
       The Apprenticeship Expansion Plan identified a number of challenges to expanding apprenticeship. Rather than pre-determining solutions to articulated challenges, this portion of the RFR is seeking respondents to develop creative, robust, outcome-oriented solutions that will support the recommendations outlined in Section VIII of the *Apprenticeship Expansion Plan*. Specifically, EOLWD is looking for flexible, innovative solutions to the following challenges:

        a) *Lack of a diverse apprenticeship talent pipeline.*
        b) *Lack of simple pathways and transferability.*
        c) *Lack of consistent, streamlined marketing and communications targeting jobseekers and employers.*

Massachusetts Registered Apprenticeship Tax Credit—Passed July 2018

Massachusetts businesses will be eligible for a credit against its excise due, an amount equal to $4,800 or 50% of the wages paid to each qualified apprentice in a taxable year, whichever is less. If a credit allowed by this section exceeds the tax otherwise due under this chapter, 100% of the balance of such credit may, at the option of the taxpayer, be refundable to the taxpayer.

Tech Apprenticeship Program

Multiple stakeholders worked toward finding workforce solutions for tech employers unable to find skilled job seekers. EOLWD, MassHire State Workforce Board, MDCS, Apprenti, One8 Foundation, and Mass TechHire partnered and designed a plan to fill employer demand for skilled tech workers. The official Launch of the Commonwealth's first tech Registered Apprenticeship took place during National Apprenticeship Week in November 2018.

G. Workforce Training Fund Programs (WTFP)

The Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP), operated by Commonwealth Corporation, provides Massachusetts businesses with resources to invest in the skills of their workforce. Financed by Massachusetts employers, WTFP offers matching grants up to $250,000 to offset training costs of workers. In PY17, the Workforce Training Fund Program offered four types of grants to Massachusetts businesses. Businesses who are eligible to participate must contribute to the Workforce Training Fund via a surcharge of Unemployment Insurance payments. These grants are supporting training for thousands of workers and improving the competitiveness and productivity of hundreds of businesses across the Commonwealth. The four types of grants are described below:

- General Program Training Grant: Businesses of any size are eligible to apply. (Intermediaries may lead a consortium application.) They may request up to $250,000 for up to two years to support training for their workforce. Grant funds must be matched dollar-for-dollar. The match may be cash or in-kind (including wages paid to employees during training).

- Express Program Grant: Businesses with 100 or fewer employees are eligible to apply. Grant funds will pay for up to 50% of the cost of an employee's participation in training courses selected from a database of registered courses. Businesses may receive up to $30,000 per calendar year; the maximum payment per trainee, per course is $3,000.

- Direct Access Program: Businesses of any size are eligible to participate. Training organizations across Massachusetts are selected through a competitive procurement process to offer seats in their training programs to employees of Massachusetts businesses. The programs offer training in high-demand topics such as continuous improvement, computer skills, supervisory skills, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and manufacturing skills. Grant funds pay 100% of the cost of a training seat; a participating business must pay its employees' wages for 100% of the time they spend in training that is funded through the grant.

- On-The-Job Training Program: This pilot program began in PY16. Grant funds are targeted to support businesses in hiring and training Massachusetts residents who have been unemployed for 30 weeks or longer. Businesses work with a participating MassHire Career Center to recruit eligible job seekers, develop a training plan, and receive a wage subsidy of up to 75% (a maximum of $7,500) for training the new employee over a period of up to

26 weeks. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board is managing the statewide program; the Board and participating career centers are paid a service fee for each individual who is enrolled in the program and is retained in training for at least 4 weeks.

WTFP Summary for Program Year 2017			
	Trainees	**Amount**	**Employers**
General Program*	10,361	$16,850,875	170
Express Program*	3,605	$3,023,231	406
Direct Access Program	1,439	$1,304,884	350
OJT Program	21	$132,203	17
	15,426**	**$21,311,198**	**943****

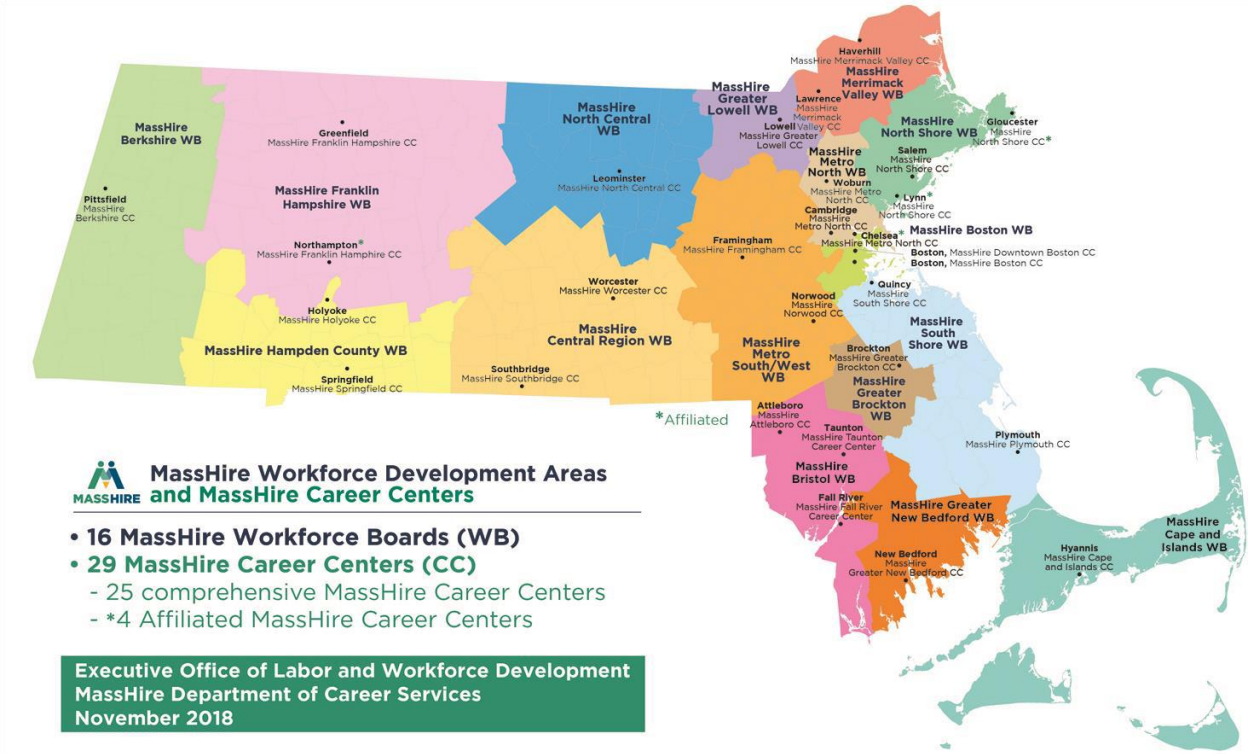
*Activity proposed in grants of up to 2 years, approved in 2018 with training continuing through 2020.

**Includes some duplication in cases where employers participate in more than one grant/program during 2018.

H. MassHire Branding

MassHire is the brand unifying the entire Massachusetts Workforce Development System under a single name and shared mission. Commissioned by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), it signifies the state's commitment to increasing meaningful career opportunities for job seekers and expanding the talent pool for businesses seeking trained, skilled employees. The brand, MassHire, unifies and empowers all state, regional, and local workforce entities. It enables them to communicate with clients—job seekers and businesses—with a clear, consistent, powerful message. MassHire provides a foundation for conveying the depth, breadth, and connectivity of its value and services across all audiences.

Massachusetts launched MassHire on August 29, 2018. The Massachusetts Workforce Development Board and each of the sixteen local workforce development boards became MassHire Workforce Boards and the 29 One-Stop Career Centers became MassHire Career Centers. WIOA partner agencies are co-branding with MassHire furthering unification of the workforce system through a vision shared on behalf of the customer and establishment of pathways to services focused on customers not funding streams.



I. Business Engagement

MassHire Department of Career Service's (MDCS) Rapid Response Services

The MDCS Rapid Response staff works closely with the Department of Unemployment Assistance, local MassHire Career Center management and business service representatives, the 16 MassHire Workforce Boards, state and local business and economic development professionals, employer associations and organizations, unions, and local educational institutions. The MDCS Rapid Response deployment approach is closely coordinated with the MDCS with respect to harnessing administrative, programmatic, systems, and reporting support for local efforts. MDCS Rapid Response information gathering begins the essential processes for development of National Dislocated Worker Grant applications, and identification of state and local resources to effect layoff aversion wherever possible. Additionally, MDCS Rapid Response assists employers with Trade Program certification.

The MDCS Rapid Response Team served 269 companies experiencing closings or layoffs affecting 15,471 employees in PY17. Ninety percent of the companies served by Rapid Response in PY17 were centered in the following industrial sectors: manufacturing (23%), retail trade (31%), miscellaneous (16%), healthcare and social assistance (15%), professional, scientific and technical services (6%), finance and insurance (6%), accommodation and food services (6%), information (1%), transportation and warehousing (2%).

Layoff Aversion Strategic Services

The United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA) considers a layoff averted when either a worker's job is saved with an existing employer that is at risk of downsizing or closing, or when a worker at risk of dislocation transitions to a different job with the same employer or a new job with a different employer experiencing little or no unemployment. The key to successful layoff aversion is identification of at-risk companies and early intervention by Rapid Response.

MDCS Rapid Response through MassHire BizWorks proactively seeks to identify at-risk companies, intervene early and propose alternatives to layoffs. The team advises companies of available federal, state and local assistance programs, such as WorkShare; the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP); the Employee Ownership (ESOP) program; and the Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP); and matching soon-to-be dislocated workers with growing companies. The Massachusetts WorkShare Program allows workers in a company, a department or smaller unit within the company to work reduced hours while collecting unemployment insurance benefits to supplement their reduced wages. ESOPs are employee-owned businesses where the employees buy the business from the owner. Tools, such as the Layoff Aversion Services Database match businesses and non-profit organizations to various programs and opportunities based on the company's parameters.

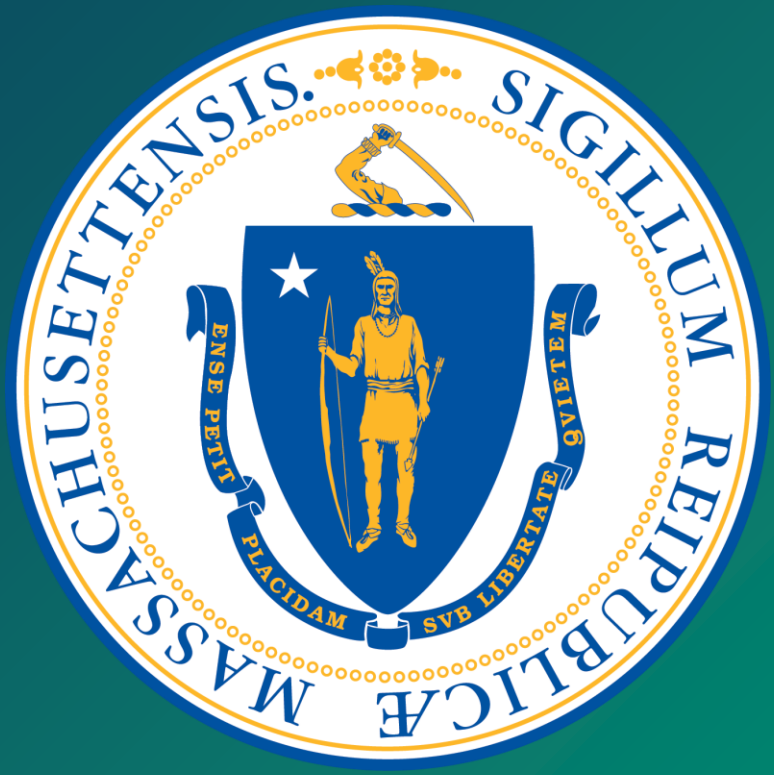
The MDCS Rapid Response Team continued to improve layoff aversion strategies in PY17 under MassHire BizWorks featuring a robust marketing program and an expanded partnership with stakeholders in and outside of state government. There are many states interested in adopting the MDCS Rapid Response team's layoff aversion strategies for which team members traveled to other states utilizing the Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Grant (TAT) from the Department of Labor. In addition, other states have traveled to Massachusetts utilizing the TAT Grant funds to receive training. The MassHire BizWorks Program is the most requested program in the TAT Catalog.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Massachusetts selected the approaches in the table below for federal performance reporting. The state will be evaluating these measures during PY18 and reviewing additional metrics to broaden the scope for measuring effectiveness in serving employers in the future.

Pilot approaches	Numerator / Denominator	Rate
Retention with same employer in the 2nd and 4th quarters after exit rate	33,370	89.1%
	37,444	
Repeat business customers rate	6,760	25.2%
	26,811	

A Business Engagement Committee, under the direction of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, is defining a statewide MassHire Recruitment Solutions Initiative (RSI). This business service model will provide MassHire Career Centers with operational policies and procedures to assist with large-scale business recruitments and hiring by establishing strong business working relationships for sourcing and delivering quality human capital talent with the goal of improving the value of the MassHire workforce system to the business community.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