



Commonwealth Of Massachusetts

Workforce Information Grant

Annual Report For Program Year 2008

September 2009

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Massachusetts Workforce Information Grant Annual Report for Program Year 2008

A. Statewide Workforce Information System Overview

Massachusetts' Workforce Development system is overseen by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD). Workforce Information products and services are developed and disseminated primarily by EOLWD's Department of Workforce Development's Division of Career Services (DCS) and Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), in coordination with EOLWD. Commonwealth Corporation (an agency reporting to EOLWD) through its Center for Research and Evaluation also contributes through targeted studies examining the responsiveness of policies and programs to changes in economic conditions.

EOLWD assures that products and services provided with these grant funds are consistent with the Governor's Strategic Plan and Goals and with the vision of the Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board (MWIB). Labor market and workforce information resources provide the Commonwealth with information on jobs, wages, labor force, and occupations that support economic development efforts, workforce partners' job development, performance management and business planning, and customers' needs at the state and local levels.

Our design and use of workforce information is guided by how effectively those products, tools and services support the state's identified needs for the information and by the strategic plan. The core products and services are designed to meet customers' needs and to offer the flexibility for adjustments with changes in the Commonwealth's economic climate and the strategic plan.

Additionally, by providing real time information on those unemployed and seeking work, projected job vacancies, demand occupations, occupational supply and wage information at the state and local Workforce Investment Area levels, the data and information products produced with the Workforce Information funding provide the Governor and other state and local policy makers with the tools they have identified as needed to assist them in planning and meeting the state's strategic workforce and economic development goals. The data, information, products and reports are readily available to policy makers, job seekers and citizens in real time access through the web site mass.gov/lmi.

EOLWD has the responsibility of ensuring the appropriate development and dissemination of workforce information and labor information, including economic, career, and job vacancy data to all state and local workforce development partners. Its key focus is identifying and serving the needs of local workforce boards, One-Stop Career Centers and their partnering organizations, as well as educators and job seekers, employers, students and parents served by local workforce providers.

The strategies employed to ensure wide dissemination of labor market and workforce information include assuring availability via the Internet, developing specific targeted products, staff training (such as our LMI training component directed to counselors and employer service staff of the One-Stop Career Centers), providing technical assistance in the use and availability of information, and making presentations to inform and educate. Economists are available to provide direct assistance to all individuals who contact them in person, by phone, or through email.

All labor market (LMI) and workforce information (WI), including a comprehensive career information system (MassCIS) <http://masscis.intocareers.org/loginmain.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fdefault.aspx&cookieTest=y> and LMI delivery system, are available online at the Commonwealth's web site at mass.gov/lmi.

The Massachusetts Workforce Board Association, representing the sixteen Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), provides guidance for the development of state and local labor market information, workforce profiles, and related research efforts to ensure that we address the needs and concerns of local boards.

B. Core Products and Services

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's Division of Career Services, Economic Analysis Office, and Division of Unemployment Assistance, Economic Research Department developed and provided workforce information products and services in the following core areas as defined in the Workforce Information grant.

1. Populate the Workforce Information Database With State and Local Data

The Workforce Information Database (WID), which contains the LMI and WI data, is current with all releases, version 2.4, required of the grant. All data and information products developed through this grant, and those requested by customers, are made available at the time of release through the Commonwealth's web site at mass.gov/lmi. The WID supports all of the electronic applications. The core LMI, WI and required workforce information database tables are populated for public use on date of release.

In addition to the core WI requirements, customized additions have been made to support Massachusetts developed data series and levels of aggregation requested by customers. Responses to customized data queries were provided through special web links in standardized formats.

2. Produce and Disseminate Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

The 2006-2016 statewide long-term industry and occupational projections were developed in summer 2008 using the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Projections consortium and the Projections Managing Partnership. However, due to the rapidly deteriorating economic environment in fall 2008, the estimates were put on hold and revised at the end of 2008 to incorporate the most recent available data.

Massachusetts' estimates of job growth and replacement needs are widely used by educators, career counselors, policy makers, government agencies and businesses. As the state's workforce ages and industry shortages develop, the projections information will become even more widely used.

As required by the WI grant, the 2006-2016, revised projections data were released in early 2009, and two publication products on employment projections were released in March 2009 and are available on mass.gov/lmi. A PowerPoint also was developed presenting the projections data and interpretation for use with local users. Data are also being incorporated into the fall 2009 release of the Massachusetts Career Information system (MassCIS).

Short-term projections were not developed in PY 2008. EOLWD conducts a bi-annual job vacancy survey that covered 10,000 employers each in PY 2008. The job vacancy survey, available at <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/LMljobvacancy.asp>, has been found to be a better indicator of short-term demand by providing current real-time openings data by industry and occupation for the state and local areas. Additional resources have been put into this survey, which tracks business hiring demand by industry and occupation, and education and training for each of the state's seven regions.

The Administration places high priority on expanding our ability to understand and identify the "skill gaps" in the economy expressed by the number of job vacancies requiring skills not present in our supply of unemployed workers. The Job Vacancy Survey is the primary tool used to identify these skills gaps and training needs and to evaluate our long-term projections data.

With response rates averaging 80 percent across the regions, the job vacancy survey provides a richer, more comprehensive picture of the shifts and turning points in the hiring demand for workers than two year forecasts, particularly on an occupational basis in rapidly changing industries such as bio-tech and information technology.

Limitations of the projections' two year forecasting methodology (i.e. by using and applying the same change factor--20 percent of the expected 10 year change--to each occupation) can distort the hiring demand for workers in these industries by over or under estimating demand for selected workers. In short, the present two-

year forecasting methodology cannot adequately capture shifts in the demand for workers and skills that Massachusetts policy makers require to align workforce training programs to meet employer needs.

In the fall of 2008, EOLWD used workforce information grant funds to pay for the processing of the 1,049 employer establishments surveyed for the May 2008 BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OES) survey panel that were not funded by BLS. BLS reduced the May sample by this size to offset the 2008 federal rescission. Restoring the OES sample provided sufficient sample to continue to produce OES employment and wage estimates and staffing patterns for all of the Local Workforce Investment Areas for the May 2008 estimates. Additional grant funds were also used to restore the Current Employment Statistics (CES) monthly jobs estimates for the Leominster-Fitchburg-Gardner and Pittsfield NECTAs. Funding for monthly jobs estimates were also eliminated by BLS for these two areas due to the federal rescission funding cuts.

3. Publish An Annual State Economic Analysis Report for the Governor and the State Workforce Investment Board

A statewide economic and labor market analysis was finalized and published in the (PY2009) (FY2010) *State Plan Modification for the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) Workforce Investment Act / Wagner-Peyser Funding* which was submitted on June 30, 2009. The plan may be found at:

<http://www.massworkforce.org/StatePlan/>

A Massachusetts Labor Market Information Profile was published in May 2009 to coincide with the annual workforce planning cycle in late winter/early spring. This report detailed economic conditions and presented key economic data for the state. <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/FPIImiforms1.asp#Profiles>

Additionally, economists within the Economic Analysis Office delivered approximately 10 workshops, seminars and special presentations during PY 2008 across the state at the request of local workforce boards and partner agencies.

4. Post Products, Information, and Reports on the Internet

All LMI and Workforce Information data, products and reports are released and publicly accessible through the web as required by the WI Grant. The economic data pages and data tools on the web have been updated to meet Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards (section 508) defined by the Federal government and pass HTML validation.

The consolidation of information delivery through the improved site provides for immediate access at time of release for all workforce information and LMI data and products. Providing a direct link to LMI and WI allows customers to see at a glance

the latest information on jobs, the labor force, the unemployment rate, and wages by occupation, and get access to all information in downloadable formats. Additional query tools have been developed to provide optional formats requested by customers. We continue to work with the workforce agencies, and other customers to improve and expand Internet access to data.

Customers accessing the LMI and WI electronic tools continue to increase. Website usage of the query tools, which grow more popular every year. Additionally, the city/town data search also is linked directly from the mass.gov home page through the *Find resources in your community* search option.

The state disseminated customer-focused occupational and career information through the Massachusetts Career Information System (MassCIS), which is managed by EOLWD. Massachusetts contracts annually with intoCareers out of the University of Oregon to use the national CIS program, and to host the MassCIS web site at:

<http://masscis.intocareers.org/loginmain.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fdefault.aspx&cookieTest=y>

MassCIS includes occupational skill requirements, user-friendly descriptions, wages, and current and forecast employment by occupation, plus links to web-based job sites and to educational and training venues. These include colleges and universities nationwide, as well as proprietary training schools in Massachusetts. DCS develops the information on proprietary schools through an annual survey.

The Massachusetts Career Information System (MassCIS) continued to be available free online to all Massachusetts residents. During the year, there were over a dozen training sessions, during which over 150 career center and education counselors were trained in using MassCIS. Over 131,600 visitor sessions were recorded in PY2008. Visitor sessions, or hits, could be identified as coming from each of the 37 State One-Stop Career Centers. We can only identify our users if they login using a recognizable user name and password. Despite this, we know that a minimum of 22% of our users during PY08 were Career Center staff and clients. Among the new information provided in the system were updated occupational employment and outlook data, wage data, and occupational licensing information.

State budgets are tight nationwide. In spite of this, or perhaps because of this, the number of states buying a license for the Career Information System (CIS) has gone from seventeen to twenty over the last two years. People recognize that the CIS offers an excellent way to convey labor market, occupational, and educational information at a reasonable cost.

Eight of sixteen Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) stated in their ARRA plan submissions that they will use MassCIS. They intend to use MassCIS for purposes including: as a source for labor market information; for job matching, referral, and

placement; for mini and in-depth assessment; to identify transferable skills; and as part of their Career Center Seminar.

In many of the WIBs that did not specifically mention MassCIS in their ARRA plans, their area Career Center staff and clients access the CIS extensively. For example, in Hamden County, 123 users accessed the CIS at FutureWorks in June '09; while in the North Shore WIB area, there were 152 users in Lynn and 113 users in Salem.

In MassCIS there is an article called Career Opportunities in Renewable Energy which gives short descriptions of different types of renewable energy, and has 35 links to appropriate occupations in the CIS.

In this fall's release there will be a section called "Green Jobs and Resources", which will provide information about how to use the CIS to find a "green" job, as well as providing links to job boards for "green" employment, career ideas, background reports, and educational resources.

intoCareers (the business arm of CIS at the University of Oregon) is in the process of developing new content for the CIS that should be available within the next twelve months. There will be two new components, Industries and Green Jobs.

5. Partner and Consult with Workforce Investment Boards

Approximately ten workshops, including training sessions and customized presentations, were delivered during PY 2008 in response to specific requests from local workforce partners. These customized sessions provided information to support state and local workforce planning, economic development and employer needs.

EOLWD published Regional Labor Market Information Profiles for each of the sixteen (16) workforce areas in May 2009. The regional profiles are developed yearly in response to demand from local workforce boards and issued to coincide with the annual workforce planning cycle. These reports detailed economic conditions and presented key economic data within the workforce areas. The Profiles are posted on the web site at:

mass.gov/lmi <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/FPIforms1.asp#Profiles>

EOLWD will also continue to consult with key members of the MWIB, and local boards, to ascertain which key indicators of labor market demand and supply are needed to develop the capacity of regions in this current recessionary period, so that more current labor market and economic data for planning, analysis, and policy development purposes can be developed and provided. By providing access to relevant and easy to understand labor market information, workforce development officials will be able to build the capacity of their regions to analyze, interpret, and use labor market data on an ongoing basis.

6. Conduct Special Studies and Economic Analyses

Staffing Patterns

Staffing patterns based on the May 2007 Occupational Employment Statistics, which provide customers with the mix of occupations within industries and the employment and wages for each occupation, were developed and published for the state and the local workforce areas. Several LWIBs have requested these data, which provide information on jobs by occupation and industry, be produced for the May 2008 survey.

Additionally, special tabulations have been prepared to show users how to integrate occupational/industry matrix data into their job development activities.

Occupational Supply

To assist Career Centers and LWIBs in identifying the readily available labor supply for projects funded through ARRA, special snapshots by six digit Standard Occupational Classification codes of those claiming unemployment insurance benefits were developed and provided through massworkforce.org.

Industry and Occupational Matrix for 2006 and 2016

An industry/occupation and occupation/industry matrix was developed for the State for both the base 2006 year and the 2016 projection year. These current and projected staffing patterns, along with the change, were posted on the internet in July 2009 at http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/Occupation_projection_a.asp.
http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/Industry_projection_a.asp

Job Vacancy Survey

Two semi-annual surveys, covering 10,000 employers each, were conducted in PY 2008, and two comprehensive reports presenting the findings were published in September 2008 and March 2009. Additional presentations and analyses have been prepared to help customers understand and address the issue of skill shortages in Massachusetts, and much work along these lines has been done in conjunction with other workforce agencies, most notably Commonwealth Corporation. Reports are posted on the Internet at mass.gov/lmi
<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/LMIjobvacancy.asp>

Monthly LMI Fact Sheets

In response to demand from local data users, and with their input, five Regional LMI Fact Sheets were developed and expanded. These reports have been issued monthly beginning in July 2006 and posted on the Internet at <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/FPIforms1.asp>

Occupational Wage Statistics

A May 2008 occupational wage statistics report with detailed and summary level tables for the state, workforce areas, and NECTA areas was published in July 2009, and is now posted on the Internet at <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/FPIforms1.asp>

High Wage/High Demand/High Skilled

A tabulation of occupations that meet our established criteria of high wage, high demand, or high skilled occupations was developed to help policy makers, job developers, and job counselors to better target training needs. This was posted on the internet in July 2009 at

<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/EmploymentProjections.asp#High-Demand>

Industry Employment Structures within Massachusetts and Workforce Areas

A set of tables on the industry employment distributions and location quotients for the 16 workforce areas, and an accompanying guide to interpreting and analyzing the data was published, in August 2008 and is posted on the Internet at

<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/FPIforms1.asp>

Current Population and Demographic Tabulations for Towns, Counties, and Workforce Areas

Population estimates for 2008, and historical trends for the state, counties, workforce areas, and cities and towns within the workforce areas, were compiled and published at various times during PY 2008 shortly after the various release dates.

The Indicators also included data showing rankings, the components of population change, and age/sex and race/Hispanic distributions. The most recent tables are all updated to 2008 population data as of July 2009 and are posted on the Internet at

mass.gov/lmi <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/lmicensus.asp>

Department of Defense Expenditures in Massachusetts Towns within Workforce Areas

A report on Defense Expenditures was prepared during PY 2008. This report provides detailed information on U.S. Department of Defense Military Prime Contract Awards, and by Place of Performance Awards, for Massachusetts and its city and towns within workforce areas. This report was published in August 2008 and is posted on the Internet at <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/FPIforms1.asp>

Minimum Wage Data for Massachusetts and the United States

A minimum wage data report for Massachusetts and the U.S. was published in May 2009 and is posted on the Internet at:

<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/FPIforms1.asp>

C. Expenditures

	<u>Carry-in from PY 07</u>	<u>PY 08 Funds</u>	<u>Total Expenditures</u>
PS/PB	\$0.00	\$528,238.00	\$528,238.00
NPS	\$0.00	\$136,458.00	\$136,458.00
Total	\$0.00	\$664,696.00	\$664,696.00