



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2009-8
February 12, 2009

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: TAFDC – Vocational Specialists and Job Search/Job Readiness Workshops

Overview

The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is committed to helping its clients achieve self sufficiency, a key component of which is obtaining employment. The Massachusetts One-Stop Career Centers are a major source of job-seeking assistance for DTA clients. The services provided to DTA clients at career centers operated by the Department of Career Services (DCS) were, however, significantly curtailed. This reduced service level may result in fewer clients entering into employment necessary to attain self sufficiency.

Vocational specialists in certain TAOs will be offering Job Search/Job Readiness workshops to our TAFDC clients. These Job Search/Job Readiness workshops will address all aspects of obtaining and maintaining a job.

These workshops are only available to clients in TAOs where vocational specialists are assigned: Brockton, Dudley Square, Fall River, Holyoke, New Bedford, Newmarket Square, Revere, Springfield Liberty, Springfield State and Worcester. Clients will be able to participate in workshops through the vocational specialist's recommendation. These workshops will begin in February.

Purpose of Memo

The purpose of this Field Operations Memo is to tell TAO staff:

- about the workshops;
 - the benefits of the workshops; and
 - how clients are enrolled in the workshops.
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Job Search/Job Readiness Workshops

The Job Search/Job Readiness workshop is a series of four one-and-a-half hour sessions held in the TAO. These workshops will acquaint clients with the services the career centers offer as well as successful job search techniques. The maximum number of clients per workshop session will be limited to 15. Once one workshop is full, the client will be encouraged to attend the next available workshop.

Note: Once enrolled, if a client misses a session in the series of workshops, he or she may make up attendance in that session the next time the session is offered (usually the following month).

The series of workshops will include the following topics:

- 1) Getting Started—information about job-seeking preparation activities such as networking and introduction to local career centers.
- 2) Applying for a Job—making the best use of career center resources such as the kiosk, useful websites, resume building, searching for a job on the internet, and other resources.
- 3) Interviewing Skills—preparation for job interviews including resume writing, personal hygiene, and appropriate attire.
- 4) Post-Employment Activities—benefits planning, job retention, post-employment job supports, and advancement in employment.

A certificate of completion will be given to the client once he or she has attended all four sessions.

**Workshop
Benefits**

The benefits of these workshops include:

- giving clients instructions about getting and keeping employment, including how best to utilize the resources of the one-stop career centers;
 - increasing the number of successful job placements;
 - increasing the rate of job retention by the client; and
 - helping clients meet their work program requirement.
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Referring Clients Clients may be referred to these workshops either by the case manager or the vocational specialist:

Case managers who are referring clients to any Job Search/Job Readiness activity should inform clients about the availability of these workshops. Referrals to Job Search/Job Readiness are made by selecting Job Search/Job Readiness as an activity on the ESP Referral Disposition window in the ESP workflow on BEACON. If the client is interested in the workshop, he or she should be referred to the vocational specialist who will assess the client to determine appropriateness of attendance in the workshops.

Vocational specialists may ask clients to enroll in workshops after interviewing the client to assess and recommend appropriate ESP activities. If the client enrolls in the workshop, he or she will be sent back to the case manager for enrollment in Job Search/Job Readiness following established procedures, if not currently enrolled.

Important: Since these workshops count towards participation in Job Search/Job Readiness, the case manager must tell the client to include these hours when reporting participation on the *Participation and Attendance* forms.

**Transportation
Services**

Clients enrolled in Job Search/Job Readiness (including the four one-and-a-half hour sessions held in the TAO) are eligible for transportation services. See Field Operations Memo 2008-56B for procedures.

Questions

If you have any policy or procedural questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.
