

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Youth Programs

Request for Proposals



**MERRIMACK VALLEY
WORKFORCE BOARD**



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Overview of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board

The MMVWB is one of 16 Workforce Boards throughout Massachusetts, composed of knowledgeable and influential business and community leaders who are appointed by the Mayor of Lawrence on behalf of the fifteen communities that make up the region.

As a regional entity, we work closely with our local municipalities to bolster economic development and employment and to provide businesses in our region with the best trained workforce possible.

The board serves as the oversight and policy-making body for federally funded employment and training services in the region. The board also has the broader role of addressing critical labor market issues and developing strategic partnerships with local leaders in economic development, the K-12 and higher education system, government agencies, chambers of commerce, community-based and labor organizations.

Background: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

- The WIOA Youth Program is federally funded by the Department of Labor (DOL). Funds are processed through the Massachusetts Department of Career Services (DCS), which allocates WIOA Title I Youth funds to the 16 state workforce areas.
- Each workforce area procures services designed to help in-school and out-of-school youth.
- WIOA provides funding for local areas to offer year-round programs for in-school and out-of-school youth that provide a pathway to a HiSET/GED, high school diploma, higher education, industry-recognized training, and a career pathway.

Purpose of RFP

- To select **in-school** and **out-of-school youth program providers to provide year-round programming to youth in the Merrimack Valley Area** including activities that assist in the attainment of a HS Diploma/equivalent (HiSET/GED) and/or an industry recognized credential.
- Other high-priority services to be offered include: outreach & recruitment, case management, paid and unpaid work experiences, work readiness, career pathways activities, job placement, assistance with entry into post-secondary education and post participation follow-up.

Purpose of RFP (cont.)

- Proposals will be accepted for two options:
 - to provide services for WIOA eligible **in-school youth** 16-21 years of age, enrolled in secondary education full-time
 - to provide services for WIOA eligible **out-of-school youth** 16-24 years of age, not in enrolled in school **or** left school without a high school diploma/equivalency
 - **Youth must be from the Merrimack Valley area: Andover, Amesbury, Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, Lawrence, Merrimac, Methuen, Newbury, Newburyport, North Andover, Rowley, Salisbury, and West Newbury**
 - A bidder must submit a separate proposal for either option but may bid on both.
- Proposals will only compete with other proposals from the same category

Estimated Funds Available

- **Funding period: October 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023**
(programs must deliver services throughout the school year and/or summer months for both ISY and OSY)
- **75% of region's funds** must be allocated to provide services to **out-of-school youth**
- Funding allocation:
 - \$320,000

Eligible Applicants/Respondents to RFP

- Public or private agencies
- Public school systems
- Units of government
- Non-profit agencies
- Faith-based and community-based organizations
- Labor groups
- Private businesses and employers
- Proprietary schools
- Community and state colleges
- Post-secondary accredited schools and other qualified educational and training institutions who have demonstrated successful performance in serving youth

Role of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center & Workforce Board

- Provide framework services including intake, eligibility, assessments, and referrals to youth programs
- Perform all required data entry into the state database (MOSES)
- Perform TABE testing for out-of-school youth(reading/math)
- Execute contracts with youth service providers & conduct Monitoring
- Provide technical assistance including convening “Youth Provider Meetings”
- Ensure providers are meeting performance metrics
- Coordinate with the Fiscal Agent – City of Lawrence – for monthly invoicing, paid work experiences
- Monthly reporting regarding enrollments/outcomes

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY

- Citizenship/ Work Eligible
- Selective Service Compliant
- Not Attending School
- 16 - 24 years old at the time of enrollment **AND**,
- One or more of the following:
 1. School dropout
 2. Within the age of compulsory school attendance(6-16), but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter
 3. An offender/ subject to the juvenile or adult justice system
 4. Homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, or a runaway
 5. In foster care or has aged out of the foster care system
 6. Pregnant or parenting

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY (CONT.)

7. An individual with a disability

8. HS Grad/HiSET Recipient who is **low-income** and **basic skills deficient or English language learner** :

- a. At or below 8.9 grade level in reading/writing or computing skills on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- b. Unable to compute or solve problems, read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the family or in society

9. Low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. Local definitions of this barrier include:

- (i) A limited work history (less than 4 months in the past year) or no work experience;
- (ii) Involvement with any State agency providing special services, support or oversight to the youth or to the youth's immediate family;
- (iii) Residency in a Designated Census Tract Poverty Area;
- (iv) A non-traditional household member i.e.: a single parent household, or with an unofficial guardian, or with a grandparent, or with a maternal or paternal domestic partners, etc.;
- (v) Residency in public housing or Section 8 subsidized housing;
- (vi) Less than a 2.0 GPA while in school.

In-School Youth Eligibility

- US Citizenship/Work Eligible
- Selective Service Compliance
- Attending School AND 14 – 21 years old
- **Low Income AND**
- One or more of the following:
 1. Basic skills deficient
 2. English language learner
 3. An offender
 4. Homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, or a runaway
 5. In foster care or has aged out of the foster care system

In-School Youth Eligibility (cont.)

6. Pregnant or parenting
7. Individual with a Disability
8. Requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment*

Local definitions of this barrier include:

a.(i) A limited work history (less than 4 months in the past year) or no work experience;

b.(ii) Involvement with any State agency providing special services, support or oversight to the youth or to the youth's immediate family;

c.(iii) Residency in a Designated Census Tract Poverty Area;

d.(iv) A non-traditional household member i.e.: a single parent household, or with an unofficial guardian, or with a grandparent, or with a maternal or paternal domestic partners, etc.;

e.(v) Residency in public housing or Section 8 subsidized housing;

f.(vi) Less than a 2.0 GPA while in school.

****not more than 5% of new enrollments allowed using this barrier***

Eligibility Source Documentation

- Documentation is necessary to support WIOA Youth eligibility
- MassHire Merrimack Valley staff will verify and confirm that youth are eligible to participate in WIOA youth services through an examination of documents collected by the Youth Vendor.
- Documentation is retained in a hard copy file and must be available to program, fiscal monitors, and auditors for monitoring purposes.
- *Acceptable forms of source documentation can be found in MassWorkforce Issuance [100 DCS 19.101.3 : WIOA Title I Youth Eligibility Policy](#) and in the RFP attachments*

What is Low Income for WIOA?

A WIOA youth participant will be considered Low Income if their family income is at or below 70% of the Lower Living Standard (LLS):

2022 70% Lower Living Standard Income Levels (LLSIL) As determined by U.S. Department of Labor Effective April 6, 2022	
Family Size	Boston-Brockton-Nashua, MA/NH/ME/CT
1	\$13,274
2	21,754
3	29,870
4	36,866
5	43,508
6	50,877
Over 6 Increment	7,369

Low Income Status

Participants are automatically considered low income if they have any of the following barriers:

- Homeless/Runaway (as defined in McKinney Act)
- Foster Care
- They are receiving public assistance (TAFDC, EAEDC, SNAP, SSI)
- They are ***in-school*** and on a free or reduced lunch program *

* Free and Reduced-Price Lunch – Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act

- **ISY that attend a designated low-income school do not automatically qualify as low-income (community eligibility provision)**

OR

Live in a High Poverty Area

- **ISY and OSY**
- Poverty rate of 25%– *where at least 25 percent of the residents are economically disadvantaged.*

WIOA 14 Program Elements

- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act lists **14 Program Elements** that must be made available to eligible youth in order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma/ recognized equivalent or an industry recognized credential; entry into postsecondary education, occupational skills training, employment or the military.
- The Merrimack Valley requires that WIOA Title I Vendor's **provide *all of the mandatory (M) elements (6) highlighted, and *at least four (4)* additional elements in your program design. Elements not offered by the program must be available locally by referral for participants in need of those services.***

List of Mandatory Program Elements

1. Tutoring, Study Skills Training and Instruction
 2. Work Experience
 3. Follow-Up services for 12 months After Exit
 4. Financial Literacy
 5. Labor Market Services
 6. Transition to Post Secondary Education/Training
- * plus 4 additional elements of program's choosing for a total of 10 on-site (Referrals to other elements required as needed)***

WIOA Program Elements

Program Element	Description
Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction - MANDATORY	Development of educational achievement skills that leads to the completion of the requirements for a secondary or post secondary school diploma/credential.
Alternative Secondary School	Alternative secondary school services, or drop out recovery services.
Work Experience - MANDATORY	Paid and Unpaid Work experiences which include summer employment, year-round employment, pre-apprenticeship, internships/Job-Shadows, On-the-job training opportunities, employer panels, company tours
Occupational Skills	An organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields.

WIOA Program Elements

Program Element	Description
Education concurrently w/Workforce Prep	Integrated education and training that occur concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation.
Leadership Development	Opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination and other positive social behaviors.
Supportive Services	Services that enable youth to participate in program activities such as assistance with book, fees, school supplies, transportation, and legal aid services.
Adult Mentoring	Formal relationship between a youth and an adult mentor with structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement.
Follow-up Services (12 months) MANDATORY	Follow-up services are provided for 12 months after exit that include services to participants that help with retention in employment/education/training.

WIOA Program Elements

Program Element	Description
Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling	Individualized counseling which includes drug and alcohol abuse, and mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs.
Financial Literacy Education – MANDATORY	Offer instruction to all participants to learn about banking, create budgets, learn how to manage spending, credit, and debt.
Entrepreneurial Skills Training	Entrepreneurial skills training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business.
Labor Market Services – MANDATORY	Participants receive access to career counseling, career exploration, career awareness, and the use of labor market tools to learn about in-demand industry sectors or occupations
Transition to Post Secondary Education – MANDATORY	Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

Work Experience Activities

- All students must participant in paid or unpaid work experience activities and can include the following:
 - Paid and unpaid internships/work experiences
 - Summer/Year round employment
 - On-the-Job Training
 - Pre-apprenticeship programs
 - Job shadowing
 - Company Tours
 - Career Panels/Guest Speakers

Work Experience Provisions

At least 30% of each youth provider's contract must be allocated towards work experiences.

Allowable Work Experience Expenditures Include:

- **Youth Wages:** Paid hourly at state minimum wage, for employer-based work experience/OJT/apprenticeship/internship/job shadow
- **Staff Time:**
 - Staff Time developing job shadows, internships and paid/unpaid work experiences
 - Staff Time developing On-the-Job Training(OJT) and pre-apprenticeship experiences
 - Staff Time working with employers to ensure successful on-site experiences
 - Staff Time conducting participant work experience orientation sessions
 - Staff Time spent evaluating work experience/OJT/internship/job shadow
 - Staff time spent arranging and attending company tours/career panels/guest speakers
 - Staff instruction for required academic components directly related to the work experience (specific to the placement and skills needed)
 - Staff instruction of job readiness skills such as interview/resume preparation for a specific work experience and activities required to obtain permanent employment

WIOA Performance Indicators

- Programs are measured on enrollments and outcomes for program exiters
- Outcome percentages are calculated by dividing total number of exited participants obtaining an outcome by the total number of exited participants for a specific measure

WIOA Youth Performance Measures

Measures	Goals
Employment, Education, or Training in the 2 nd Quarter After Exit	81%
Employment, Education, or Training in the 4th Quarter After Exit	74%
Median Wages 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,600
Credential Attainment within 1 year After Exit	71%
Measurable Skill Gain (during enrollment)	50%
Employer Retention Measure	TBD

Individual Services Strategy (ISS)

An Individual Service Strategy (ISS) plan must be developed for each youth participant and must:

- Include career planning and the results of objective assessments
- Include education and employment goals
- Include achievement objectives and services
- Directly link to one or more performance indicators
- Identify an appropriate career pathway
- Be completed with the participant

Assessments

Assessments are important in determining the appropriate services for youth.

The ISS is based on an objective assessments that includes a review of participant:

- academic skill levels
- skill levels
- service needs
- strengths and assets

Testing tools for measuring educational functioning levels (EFLs) must be on the National Reporting Systems (NRS) federally approved list of assessments. (CASAS, TABE*, MAPT, etc.)

* All out-of-school youth must complete a TABE test

WIOA Career Pathway

CAREER PATHWAY—The term “career pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- Aligns with the skill needs of industries;
- Prepares individuals to be successful in education options;
- Includes counseling to support education and career goals;
- Includes contextualized learning within an occupational cluster;
- Organizes education, training, and other services that accelerates education and career advancement;
- Enables the attainment of a secondary and at least one postsecondary credential;
- Supports entrance or advancement within a specific occupation or occupation cluster.

Career Pathways in Priority Industries

Local priority industries as indicated in our strategic plan ([MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board WIOA Local 4-Year Plan 2022 – 2025](#)):

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Professional and Technical Services (IT)
- Healthcare and Social services
- Construction/Trades
- Education

Price Proposal

- Cover Sheet
 - Each section fully completed
 - Signed by authorized signatory
- Minimum Qualifying Criteria
 - Signatory Authorization for Corporate Providers (If Applicable)
 - Signatory Authorization for Non-Corporate Providers (If Applicable)
 - Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters
 - Certificate of Non-Collusion
 - Audit Assurance Certification
 - Certificate of Good Standing
- Budget & Budget Narrative
 - Budget Completed
 - Budget Narrative Completed

Price and Program Proposals

Bidders must submit two proposals:

- Program Proposal
- Price Proposal

Please see full RFP for submission requirements

Submission Timeframe

Date	Activity
Monday, June 21, 2022	Request for Proposals Released
Wednesday, July 20, 2022	Bidder's Conference Webinar @ 1:00 PM
Wednesday, August 10, 2022	Deadline for Submission of Written Questions by 11:00 AM
Wednesday, August 29, 2022	Proposals Due by 11:00 AM
Monday, September 19, 2022	Award/Non-Award notifications
Monday, October 3, 2022	Estimated Contract State Date

Review Process

- Proposals received by the submission deadline will be reviewed by a team of independent reviewers
- Scoring Criteria - Total 100 Points

Program Design	30 points
Outreach and Recruitment	20 points
Past Performance/Ability to Achieve Outcomes	20 points
Administration	5 points
Program Operations	5 points
Budget & Budget Narrative	20 points

Highly Advantageous	85-100
Advantageous	70-84
Not Advantageous	50-69
Unacceptable	<50

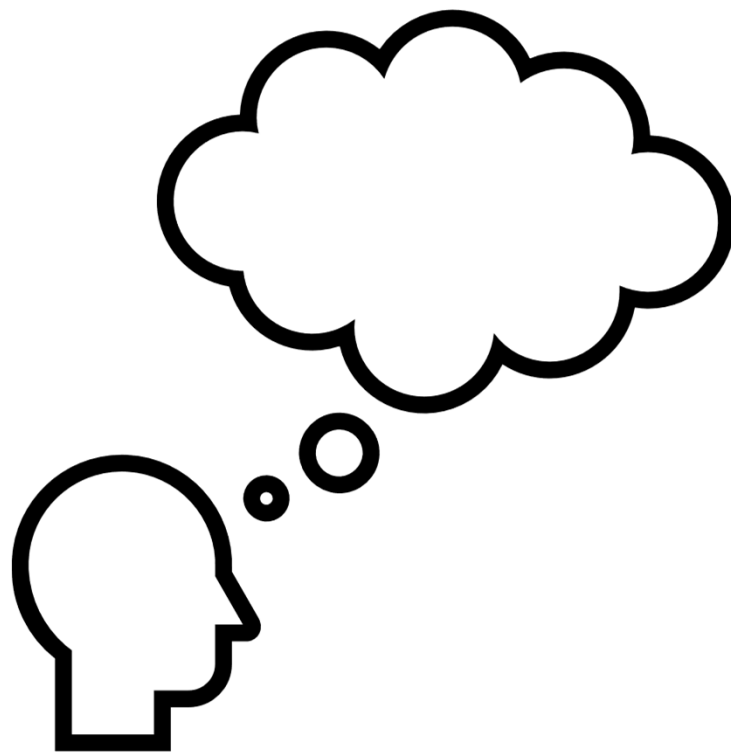
RESOURCES

[Governance & Downloads – MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board](#)

[MassWorkforce WIOA Youth policy issuances](#)

[US DOL WIOA Youth Programs](#)

Questions



Contacts

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- Program
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