

MAWB Legislative Committee
January 13, 2021

Recap: Workforce Development Fund changes have been talked about for several weeks. There is another engagement session happening soon. MAWB will provide written talking points about why it's important. If we have ideas about statutory changes for the state DW program that are important to make it more flexible, or reach more people of color, we should share them.

DEED is gathering input on the WDF changes. MAWB will see the draft language before it is sent forward. The draft would likely be reflective of DEED and the Governor's office. Unclear when it would come – sometime in February, potentially.

Talking Points Brainstorming: Why are the formula funding allocations important?

- Ensures equitable distribution across the state so that we know services will be provided across the state
- Putting the money out competitively is probably not best for people being laid off – from a client service standpoint
- DW programs and fund support the workforce system underneath DEED, so why would you want to separate that or continue to silo them from the system
- Providing formula funds allows us to have a structure/base to provide consistent high-quality services that are responsive and can move quickly
- There is a competitive process within the direct allocation.
- Formula allocations don't prevent other people from getting funding. DEED decided to give funding directly to SLIGs, so there's nothing that says they can't fund other entities.
- Even if they took state funding away, local boards would still be running a federal DW program.
- All the reasons why we would be getting formula funding for MYP are why we should be getting formula funds for State DW

Sidebar: Jeanna will forward the meeting invitation for the Chambers event tomorrow: DEED-driven event with Chambers regarding Workforce Development Fund.

Meeting with DEED and MAWB Membership Regarding WDF Changes

- Could frame it more as a general discussion as opposed to the WDF topic specifically. Invite DEED to a session that is more general and invite the MAWB membership including LEO's and Board Chairs.
 - WDF could be a part of broader messaging about the local system
 - Annual Report in-person with success stories and how we are impacting our regions the state or something...some sort of celebration.
 - Tell our story as a local system with numbers served, outcomes, outreach plans, and how we can work with DEED along with WDF items. State impact message with jobseekers and employers.
 - Also invite people from Commissioner's Office
 - Could invite Chairs and LEOs
 - Have Commissioner talk about what problems he's facing and what workforce boards can do to support

- Frame it up in context of the legislative session
- Invite the legislative staff on workforce from Governor's office?
- Highlight partnership with CareerForce

Brainstorm Possible Recommended Changes to State DW Program

- 20% cap on incumbent worker training...is that in statute or is it a DEED policy?
- Rapid Response. The sooner we can get in and speak to people who have recently been laid off, the better. Need to communicate what services are available.
- Eligibility requirements in state statute – “permanently separated, unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation, limited opportunities to return,” etc. We had talked about changing some of this during COVID since we were so unsure about whether sectors would still exist.
 - Focus on who is being served (or being left out) by DW process
 - **Proposal:** Send a document to DEED about who we are serving with DW. Not having the UI sessions occurring is a big problem. Connecting UI applicants to DEED doesn't connect them locally. This is a key point of connectivity. Not necessarily all legislative changes. But it could be one document that outlines statute changes, policy changes, operating procedure, etc...
 - Is DEED looking at historic data on DW or just in the past year?
 - Send specific data requests to Jeanna
- Training – oftentimes, people aren't able to stop working and go to training. 50% of the funding has to go to training. Not all DW enrollees want to go to training. Reduce the 50%.
- Is the DW money was more flexible, could use it to mirror the federal programs.
- 15% allocation for support services with 20% waiver – ask for flexibility on that. An overall percentage, like 70% should be used for training OR support services, and then look at eligibility requirements and see if they would need to change.
- M State's numbers for diverse populations is also extremely low. Having flexibility in WDF Support Service dollars would help increase diverse population engagement.

Discussion ensued about connecting with employers. Call it something different than Career Services – maybe Employer Services? – but this area is missing to increase serving diverse populations and to ensure we are making connections between jobseekers and employers.

Next Steps

- Becky and Jeanna will compile talking points
- Recommended changes in three buckets
- Jeanna will contact Commissioner's office regarding a meeting, making sure we're aligned going into the legislative session
- Email directors and ask for information on how many are going down to 30% training waiver and let them know about the meeting, and ask them for a list of Board members