



## **MAWB Policy & Issues Committee Minutes**

March 17, 2021

### **Local/Regional Plan Approval Process at DEED**

- Date has been extended: local/regional plans are now due May 31<sup>st</sup>. Approvals will happen as soon as possible, but all approvals will be done by August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Working with Ben Baglio (Governor's Workforce Development Board) to take strategic and equity-focused questions from the State Plan and incorporate into the Local/Regional plans. The goal is to increase collaboration and consistency – build a stronger connection from the State Plan to the Local/Regional Plans and improve the overall coordination in implementation.
- More details to come about modifications to the process for next year. DEED will try to get back on track with the regular timeline and schedule.

### **Additional OSO RFP Guidance from the DOL**

- No changes or updates were received from the DOL.
- Internal conflict of interest policies need to be in place. DEED is working on developing their own policy around this also.
- Local areas should follow local procurement policies. The process must be competitive.
- Discussion ensued about firewall requirements.

### **Dislocated Worker Policy Update**

- A small group will be meeting with Lensa Idossa to discuss. This item will be kept on the agenda – more updates to come after the first meeting.

### **Dislocated Worker Program**

- The forecast for the Workforce Development Fund (WDF) came out recently. Anne Kilzer ran the numbers to illustrate how funds will be distributed and MAWB has some concerns about the impact to the Dislocated Worker program. Meetings with DEED leadership on this topic are coming up this week. More information to come after those meetings.

### **DEED Reopening Strategies and Policies**

- No new updates about formal plans to reopen.
- Some activities/initiatives in local areas, such as outdoor career fairs or curbside events, are likely to be approved by DEED. It is a balance between safety for clients and staff and outreach to customers.
  - DEED staff can participate in these events prior to June 30<sup>th</sup> if they have capacity. Right now, a large percentage of Wagner Peyser staff time is being devoted to making thousands of calls a week to UI recipients (note, not all Job Service staff are Wagner Peyser staff).

- Reopening is dependent on Commissioner Grove of DEED. There is no specific metric that the agency is looking for/waiting for.
- Mark Jacobs commented that some employers are in a crisis because of lack of applications. UI payments may have reduced incentive to work.
- Discussion ensued about State Dislocated Worker spending, particularly as it pertains to comments made by Commissioner Grove.

### **Discussion**

- [DEED's Employer Vaccination Toolkit](#) has been used by some local areas and Chambers.
- Nicole Swanson asked whether the CareerForce Return to Workplace meetings could resume meeting at least once per month to discuss news from local areas and check-in. Lorrie Janatopoulos will pass this comment to Deputy Commissioner Warfa.
- Discussion ensued about the Job Service/Veterans Services/UI initiative to call UI recipients regarding services and programs.

### **Leading with Equity**

- A group met recently with Anisa Hajjumin and Maureen Ramirez to discuss. Good conversation regarding employers. More updates will be given at the Operations Committee.
- Ling Becker suggested that in future meetings, the Policy & Issues Committee, led by Barb Chaffee, could pause during certain agenda items to discuss implications for racial equity.
- A committee member asked whether the UI phone calls are tracking racial demographic information.
- Tammy Biery asked about the recent Tech Grant, and whether specific data indicators were used to identify the tech industry for intentional outreach to BIPOC communities.
- Ling Becker added that local boards are heavily involved in community engagement and have a unique insight into what services and programs people need.
- Elena Foshay added that a more difficult part of racial equity is long-term retention of diverse people, but local Boards are only funded to assist with retention for 12 months.

### **Next Steps**

- Marc Majors shared that DEED has three questions regarding racial equity which must be answered before submitting proposals for approval. He will check and see if he can share these questions with MAWB.
- Tammy Biery asked whether there would be any flexibility around credentialing (performance): the UI phone calls are connecting local areas to individuals who need skills and training, but most official credentialing programs don't start until the fall. This question will be asked of Marc Majors at the Operations Committee meeting.