
MEMORANDUM

June 10, 2020

To: Governors' Offices
From: National Governors Association
Re: Delivering Workforce System Employment and Training Services Remotely

Summary

Across the United States, American Job Centers (AJCs) provide a range of assistance to jobseekers, students, and businesses. Due to COVID-19, they have had to readjust their delivery methods. It is critical that AJCs continue to operate during COVID-19, because of the rise in unemployment and the growing need to provide employment and training services to unemployed and underemployed individuals. To do so, many states found innovative ways to offer program and service delivery and are providing online and remote options for training, referrals, career counseling, job listings, and other employment-related services. Governors, state agencies and private partnerships play important support roles for increasing AJCs' ability to create a remote service delivery system that meets the needs of job seekers, students, and businesses. This memo outlines strategies governors and states can implement to deliver workforce system employment and training services remotely.

Gubernatorial Levers to Expand Access to Workforce Employment and Training Services

- Governors can **support public-private partnerships** to expand access to online job matching platforms and training programs for under- and unemployed workers while social distancing measures are in place and allow them to get back to work more quickly.
 - The **Connecticut** Governor's Workforce Council [partnered](#) with the Connecticut Workforce Development Council and the Connecticut Department of Labor to expand the SkillUp CT program that will make free online learning licenses available to recipients of unemployment insurance.
 - Bitwise Industries and the Kapor Center created [OnwardUs](#), a online platform for connecting Americans impacted by COVID-19 to jobs. Through public-private partnerships, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Virginia, and Washington have [launched](#) Onward platforms to provide displaced workers a single platform for connecting with relevant resources. Michigan, North Carolina, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Texas are launching programs soon.
- Governors can apply for and **leverage Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funded Dislocated Worker Grants** with statewide Rapid Response discretionary funds to provide employment and training services, including remote services.
 - **Rhode Island** [announced](#) the use of CARES funds for Dislocated Worker Grants to provide remote employment and training services to people who were laid-off due to COVID-19, self-employed individuals who are unemployed as a result of COVID-19, and long-term unemployed individuals. Using these funds, the state will be able to coordinate more effective remote service delivery to dislocated workers and businesses.

State Efforts to Continue Workforce Services and to Prepare Staff for New Conditions

- As states have issued stay-at home orders, AJCs closed offices to protect workers and customers. Local areas at the municipal and county level announced these closures online and started **directing participants to online resources for continued virtual services**.
 - As an area heavily impacted early in the pandemic, Seattle-King WorkSource centers in **Washington** started limiting access and then closed altogether. The closure of these AJCs marked what would be the first of many closures throughout the country. States provided updated information on AJC closures. As AJCs across the country closed for in-person services, many [moved](#) to a virtual-only customer service model until further notice.

State Efforts to Provide Virtual Services for Jobseekers Under WIOA

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Titles I and III programs provide job search assistance, access to education, and training for job seekers. These programs also provide services to employers, such as incumbent worker training and layoff aversion. The staff funded by these programs are co-located within AJCs and typically coordinate efforts onsite. AJCs also refer adult learners to their adult education partners, as outlined in WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. This coordination has been disrupted by COVID-19.

- Due to closure of AJCs, states can **use online and virtual options for education and training** for the Title I Youth Program. ETA programs have flexibility in how they [provide](#) program services to provide virtual services, such as eLearning, phone calls and virtual meetings. WIOA youth funds can be used for purchasing supplies or equipment, such as laptops, tablets, or Internet hotspots, to assist in providing virtual services.
 - U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration [hosted](#) a webinar on the WIOA Youth Program during COVID-19 to highlight the innovative ways to use technology to keep program participants engaged.
 - WIOA Youth Programs in **Michigan** counties are [working](#) with students via phone and Zoom calls, email, and Facebook. They are working with relevant partners to get students access to coursework so they can continue to make progress towards their GED.
 - If you have additional questions about WIOA Youth Programs you can submit them to youth.services@dol.gov.
- States are **supporting adult education providers** and participants through the disruptions of the pandemic.
 - The [Indiana WorkOne](#) directs those seeking workforce services to an [Adult Education Facebook Group](#) where providers post information about opportunities for online training, informational workshops and unemployment resources.
 - Maine Governor Janet Mills has [signed an executive order](#) suspending certain restrictions like eligibility and employer matching requirements on job training funds managed by the Maine Community College System's Maine Quality Center (MQC) program. This flexibility allows the MQC program to provide free online training more rapidly to people who have been displaced by the recent effects of COVID-19.
 - Texas Workforce Commission has compiled [resources](#) for Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) grantees including recordings of a series of conference calls that were geared towards helping service provider navigate new guidelines and facilitate remote and distance learning. The site also provides information about free internet provider offers, resources for online curriculum and communication tools and software.
- States are **utilizing online platforms to provide job matching and employment services**.
 - WIOA Title III funding supports state investment in virtual labor market exchange platforms. State investments in labor exchange platforms include labor market information and promote the use of job fairs the ability for job seekers to upload resumes and employers to post jobs.



- In addition to state investments labor exchange platforms, states promote the use of job fairs. Job fairs are an opportunity for employers to meet job seekers and let them know about the types of jobs and skills needed to fill those jobs.
- Due to COVID-19, States have become innovative in designing virtual job fairs:
 - **Colorado** [hosts](#) Virtual Job Fairs through which employers and job seekers meet using chat rooms, webcasts, training videos, webinars and online hiring sites.
 - The **Indiana** Department of Workforce Development [hosted](#) a free, virtual job fair to share information and recruit job opportunities available at five local hospital systems, along with benefits and how to apply.
- Tennessee Grocers & Convenient Store Association, The Retail Association, and Hospitality TN [partnered](#) with the **Tennessee** Department of Labor and Workforce Development to create The Tennessee Talent Exchange. The initiative aims to help job seekers quickly find in-demand jobs, such as grocery, retail, and logistics.
- States are also **partnering with the private sector to provide online training** for job seekers.
 - The Coursera Workforce Recovery Initiative [works](#) with state governments to provide free education and skills training to unemployed individuals. Individuals can earn professional credentials and take unlimited classes. **Minnesota** Department of Economic Development is one state partnering with Coursera.
 - **Kentucky** is [expanding](#) virtual career services statewide through [Career EDGE](#). Career EDGE includes 18 interactive modules consisting of virtual coaching, job interview simulators, resume and job application builders, and essential skill curriculum to help job seekers find a job.

State Efforts to Provide Virtual Services for Employers

Virtual labor market systems funded by WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser employment funds have the capacity for employers to post open job postings. These systems also incorporate state labor market information to inform job seekers of in-demand jobs. The goal of this interface for employers is help create a one-to-one match with virtual job seekers and/or for staff to help drive recruitment for employers.

- **States are providing online platforms for employers to post job openings.**
 - The **IdahoWorks** system is available online for employers to [create](#) accounts and post their job listings and for job seekers to post their resumes and search for job opportunities. Employers can review resumes on the website.
 - **New Jersey** [created](#) the State of New Jersey COVID-19 Jobs and Hiring portal to serve as a centralized resource to match businesses across the state that are hiring for open positions with jobseekers who lost their job or have reduced hours due to COVID-19.
 - In **Ohio**, employers can [post](#) job openings and search resumes on the OhioMeansJobs platform.

Other Resources

- CompTIA is [responding](#) to COVID-19 by conducting live, virtual training for unemployed and underemployed during the crisis. CompTIA also provides WIOA-approved training programs.
- The National Association of State Workforce Agencies is [tracking](#) how state workforce agencies respond to COVID-19.
- NGA Memo on [Supporting K12 and Postsecondary Virtual Learning Environments](#)

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