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WORKFORCE SYSTEM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ISSUANCE DATE:	January 19, 2013
POLICY NUMBER:	12-04
RECISSION:	

To: Bureau of Employment Services, MDOL
Local Board Directors

From: Garret J. Oswald, Director
State Workforce Investment Board

CC: CareerCenter Distribution
Service Provider Directors
BRS Director
BES CMCC

Subject: Chambers of Commerce as required partner in local workforce areas

Background

To increase collaboration and foster stronger partnerships between workforce development activities and economic development activities, this policy requires a formal relationship, **such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**, between Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) and their local Chambers of Commerce.

The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) has identified the state's local Chambers of Commerce as vital resources for business input into the workforce development system. Meetings among the Governor's office, the SWIB, and Maine's eight regional Chambers through the Maine Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (MAACE) have resulted in an agreement that the Chamber of Commerce regions can convene the local businesses through the local Chambers and facilitate discussions that provide input to LWIBs on workforce needs in the business community.

Although individuals who are members of local Chambers of Commerce serve as members of the LWIBs, this policy seeks to formalize a specific relationship that provides deliberate business input to inform local workforce development activities, programs, and services.

The SWIB Performance Scorecard will measure the regional Chambers' penetration into their local business community, CareerCenter business service utilization by local employers, Chambers' dissemination of workforce information and promotion of workforce development system resources and programs, partnerships between Chambers and workforce development system programs, and other data that tracks business services, activities, and employment data.

A formal, deliberate relationship among LWIBs and their local Chambers of Commerce will help reach the objectives tracked by the scorecard and will provide additional information to both the LWIBs and the SWIB in addressing employment and training needs, with the goal of leveraging and maximizing workforce and economic development resources.

Based on the first year of this policy's implementation, baseline metrics will be established and those indicators will be monitored and evaluated. In year two and three, progress will be noted and assessed. Future performance objectives will then be established.

Policy:

Local Workforce Investment Boards are encouraged to contract or develop MOU's where appropriate with all of the local Chambers of Commerce and other associations within their areas to establish and maintain programs, services, and activities. These partnerships aim to establish and maintain programs, services and activities that engage employers in workforce development planning and connect them to workforce development services. Specifically, partnerships are to ensure awareness of - and linked to - the CareerCenters, with the intended outcome of increasing effective, business-led workforce development activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, employment of individuals in high wage and high growth occupations and industry, and business-responsive job training programs.

As part of the agreement process, LWIBs and local Chambers will negotiate activities to be implemented by both parties. Any funds provided to the Chambers will not be considered training funds or supportive service funds (as defined in Policy #2013-01)

Guidance:

LWIBs and local Chambers of Commerce are encouraged to be creative, innovative, experimental, and flexible. Below are some suggested activities for formal Chamber-LWIB contracts agreements:

Chambers could:

- Provide a monthly column on employment issues/services in their newsletters
- Encourage members to list job vacancies with Maine Job Bank
- Hold their meetings at CareerCenters
- Co-host/co-sponsor events (job fairs, conferences, targeted events for specific industries or specific job seeking populations, business awards, roundtables, workshops, etc)
- Invite LWIB and/or CareerCenter personnel to speak at Chamber meetings and events
- Co-brand certain products or activities to leverage LWIB, CareerCenter, and Chamber reputation and public image (workshops, outreach materials, etc)
- Provide website links to CareerCenters, LWIBs, other workforce development entities, provide info on Chamber website on LWIBs/CareerCenters
- Co-write op-eds
- Share mailing lists with CareerCenters
- Co-support job training programs
- Provide incentives to members who work with CareerCenters, list job vacancies with Job Bank, other...
- Connect businesses with business services at CareerCenters

- Assist workforce development partners with grant proposals
- Partner on special projects to increase presence of older workers, people with disabilities, veterans, women, youth, and minority individuals in their members' workforces

LWIBs/CareerCenters could:

- Host special programs for businesses that help increase Chamber membership while promoting CareerCenter services
- Use the Chamber as a mechanism to identify local industry partnerships and develop programs to meet local industry partnership needs
- Use their connection to Chambers to perform outreach to businesses
- Offer technical assistance programs to Chamber members on: OJTs, Apprenticeship, CSSP, foreign labor needs, SafetyWorks!, labor market information, posting job vacancies with the Job Bank, wage and hour law, child labor law, other labor law updates and reviews, other
- Help businesses identify training providers for their workforces
- Offer to write columns and articles for Chamber publications
- Co-host/co-sponsor events (job fairs, conferences, targeted events for specific industries or specific job seeking populations, business awards, roundtables, workshops, etc)
- Invite Chamber members to business-targeted/business only programs, events
- Establish a business oriented award, collaborate with Chamber on this
- Partner on special projects to increase presence of older workers, people with disabilities, veterans, women, youth, and minority individuals in their members' workforces
- Provide website links to local Chambers, provide info about local Chambers on LWIB and CareerCenter websites
- Facilitate connections among Chambers of Commerce and other programs and services that serve job seekers and workers, especially local community based organizations and service providers
- Membership in local Chambers of Commerce

Performance Goals:

Performance goals will be mutually agreed to by the LWIBs and Chambers of Commerce and other associations when applicable. The metrics will be collected and reported on the Performance Scorecard.

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Attachment: [Business Services Performance Scorecard](#)