



# **HAMPDEN COUNTY WORKFORCE BOARD**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR  
WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM PROVIDERS  
IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

**FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027  
July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027**

***(with potential renewal of one additional year)***

**MASSHIRE HAMPDEN COUNTY WORKFORCE BOARD  
1441 Main Street  
Springfield, MA 01103**

**RESPONSE DUE:  
Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 12:00 p.m. EST**

Please submit all questions to [RFP@masshirehewb.com](mailto:RFP@masshirehewb.com)

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- Attachment A-Letter of Intent
- Attachment B-Cover Page
- Attachment C- Proposal Checklist
- Attachment D1 or D-2 Proposal Summary Forms
- Attachment E- Partnership Form
- Attachment F-Fiscal Questionnaire
- Attachment G- Certificate of Lobbying Activities
- Attachment H: Certificate Regarding Debarment, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion
- Attachment I- Board Membership
- Attachment J- Program Narrative

## INTRODUCTION AND SCHEDULE

### Introduction

MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHHCWB) seeks qualified organizations to deliver In-School Youth (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), collectively referred to as the WIOA Youth Program Providers (YPPs). Providers must deliver high-quality, year-round education, training, and employment services to youth with barriers to employment.

MHHCWB seeks proposals with innovative approaches to service delivery that meet the specifications outlined in this RFP. The organization should demonstrate that it can offer a range of training and employment services for youth based on individual need and employer demand; resources to deliver comprehensive youth services that focus on assisting out-of-school youth and in-school youth, with one or more barriers to employment, prepare for employment and postsecondary education opportunities; attain educational and/or skills training credentials; and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. Successful applications will describe in detail the organization's plan to implement the activities described in this RFP; demonstrate ability to innovate; design and develop work experience opportunities and training programs; achieve, track, and report outcomes; demonstrate ability to secure additional funding to supplement existing funding streams; and meet government accounting and expense requirements.

MHHCWB will evaluate all proposals submitted by the deadline and will competitively award contracts to bidders whose submissions are most responsive to the need for services described herein.

Applicants may propose to serve In-School Youth (ISY), Out-of-School Youth (OSY), or both. The selected providers will provide education, employment, and training services to economically disadvantaged youth in the twenty-community region known as the Hampden County workforce development area (see Appendix A for regional map). The Hampden County region has a culturally diverse youth population that includes the following service groups: public assistance recipients, limited English speakers, individuals with disabilities, youth without a high school diploma, immigrant youth, foster care youth, runaway and homeless youth, and court-involved youth.

The selected providers' contracts will start July 1, 2026, and end June 30, 2027. Contracts may be renewed for one additional fiscal year, depending on performance.

A copy of the WIOA regulations is available at [HTTPS://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/](https://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/)

## Schedule

Date	Activity
March 4, 2026	Request for Proposals released
March 11, 2026 at 9:00 A.M.	Bidder's Conference Webinar Register here: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/MHHCWBwioa">https://tinyurl.com/MHHCWBwioa</a>
March 20, 2026 by 5:00 PM	Letters of Intent due Submit to <a href="mailto:RFP@masshirehcb.com">RFP@masshirehcb.com</a>
April 3, 2026 by 5:00 PM	Deadline for submission of written questions
April 15, 2026 by 12:00 PM	Proposals due
(Anticipated) June 1, 2026	Bidders notified of outcome
Contract start date	July 1, 2026

## BACKGROUND AND GOVERNANCE

### MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHHCWB) workforce development area comprises twenty-three cities and towns in Agawam, Blandford, Brimfield, Chester, Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Granville, Hampden, Holland, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Monson, Montgomery, Russell, Palmer, Southwick, Springfield, Tolland, West Springfield, Wales, Westfield, and Wilbraham. Since 1980, the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Inc. (MHHCWB), formerly the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc. has been the region's primary planner and convener to address workforce development issues. Established by Federal and State legislation, MHHCWB is a business-led, non-profit corporation that engages its members from business, education, labor and community-based agencies to set public policies that will build a better workforce.

### Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Overview

On July 22, 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law. WIOA is a federal program funded through the U.S. Department of Labor and is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

For youth programs, WIOA emphasizes:

- Out of School youth (minimum of 75% of youth funds)
- Work experience (minimum 20% of total youth funds)
- Comprehensive year-round services
- Strong employer engagement

The WIOA Youth program requires providers to make all fourteen program elements available to participants. These elements ensure that youth receive comprehensive, developmentally appropriate services that support their educational advancement, career readiness, and long-term employment success. Required elements include: tutoring; alternative secondary school services; paid and unpaid work experiences, which include: summer and year round employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training; occupational skill training; education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training; leadership development opportunities; supportive services; mentoring; follow-up services; comprehensive guidance and counseling; financial literacy education; entrepreneurial skills training; services that provide labor market and employment information; and postsecondary education and training preparation activities.

## HAMPDEN COUNTY WIOA YOUTH VISION AND PRIORITIES

### Hampden County WIOA Youth Vision

The vision of MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board is to develop 21st-century skills that prepare youth for quality careers. This vision encompasses collaboration with schools and community partners to ensure that youth achieve significant advancements in their career pathways through the implementation of an integrated and coordinated career service delivery system.

### Hampden County Priority Areas

MHHCWB has outlined the following priority areas for WIOA youth programs:

- Programs are easily accessible by public transportation, especially for residents living in highpoverty communities.
- Occupational training and employer partnerships within the Hampden County Priority Sectors: Healthcare and Social Assistance, Education Services, and Advanced Manufacturing.

Program services for priority populations:

- Public assistance recipients
- Limited English speakers
- Youth with disabilities
- Youth without a high school diploma
- Foster care youth, runaway and homeless youth and court-involved youth.
- Strong employer partnerships that provide high-quality work experiences
- Sustainable career pathways that help bridge the gap between existing youth career-related services and work experience opportunities that lead to employment.

- Wide range of community partnerships to provide supportive services, particularly in the areas of mental health, childcare, and housing.
- Technology-based programs, including entrepreneurial training and innovative sector-based initiatives

Proposals that incorporate any or all of these initiatives into their program will be given priority for funding consideration.

## Resources

MHHCWB has developed a Local Plan that contains labor market information about the Hampden County area. Since the information is readily available to bidders, it will not be repeated in this RFP. The Local WIOA plan may be accessed directly at: <https://masshirehchw.com/wioa-plan-and-publications/>

- MHHCWB’s Strategic Plan for Impact is its roadmap for addressing joblessness and creating quality career pathways in the Hampden County region over the next four years. This Strategic Plan contains significant information about MHHCWB’s goals and objectives. Since the information is readily available to bidders, it will not be repeated in this RFP. The July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026 Local Strategic Plan may be accessed here: <https://masshirehchw.com/strategic-plan/>

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts WIOA information may be found at <http://www.mass.gov/massworkforce/>. Proposers must be knowledgeable regarding the statutes, regulations, rules, and policies for the funding streams. A copy of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and regulations may be found on the U.S. Department of Labor web page at <https://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/>. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Final Rules Resources can be found at: <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/about/final-rules/>

## FUNDING AND PERFORMANCE PERIOD

### Funding Levels

The WIOA Youth allocation for FY27, the period covered by this RFP, has not yet been determined. Applicants must clearly identify in their proposal whether they are serving youth who are In-School, Outof-School, or both, the number of proposed slots, and the budget required to deliver services at the proposed service level.

MHHCWB does not predetermine the number of WIOA Youth Program Providers (YPPs) to be funded. The number of awards will depend on various factors, including, but not limited to, the number of applicants, the quality of proposals submitted, and the amount of funding available.

To provide a general sense of existing funding levels, the FY26 WIOA Youth allocation was:

In-School Programs: 3 programs funded at \$ 356,249.58. Average per slot cost= \$3,652.74. Out-of-School Programs: 3 programs funded at \$1,177,500.00. Average per slot cost = \$6,193.39

These figures are provided for planning purposes only and do not guarantee future funding levels.

### Availability of Funds

For planning purposes, the respondent to this RFP should assume no more than level funding for each program year. As described above, Fiscal Year 2027 amounts are yet to be determined and are subject to change. The materials in this RFP are designed to give the bidder a general scope of funding available.

It is understood that funds will fluctuate from year to year. The contract agreement shall be modified to increase or decrease funding as needed to reflect actual funds received during the contract period. Successful YPPs will be awarded a cost-reimbursement contract for work performed pursuant to this RFP. The MHHCWB may expand the scope of the contract to include other programs, funding, or requirements that the MHHCWB deems necessary and appropriate.

MHHCWB anticipates funding at least one proposal that includes serving Springfield and at least one proposal that includes service to youth in the balance of Hampden County for both the in-school and out-of-school allocations. Bidders may propose serving youth in more than one area.

Each proposal should plan to spend no more than 60% of its total funds during the summer months, with the remainder spent between September 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027. However, this RFP does not solicit programs that operate only during the summer months.

Service providers should offer at least 5 weeks of paid summer employment. Youth participating in an employment activity that combines work experience and education may be paid a stipend in accordance with vendor policy approved by MHHCWB. Youth participating in all other WIOA paid work experience or internships are to receive at least the MA prevailing minimum wage for 15-20 hours per week during the summer. Older youth may be paid a higher wage. In all cases, payments will need to be adjusted based on actual attendance. Policies for prorating payments will be described by the bidder in their proposal.

All agreements are subject to the availability of funds.

MHHCWB will also ask bidders to outline matching resources to leverage the WIOA funds in the proposal budget. No minimum amount is prescribed; although significant match will be favorably reviewed. All WIOA reimbursed costs at the vendor level will be defined as program dollars.

**MHHCWB will retain WIOA resources, which are separate from the funds distributed through this RFP. Service providers may request these funds from MHHCWB to:**

- Provide incentives/bonuses for recognition and achievement of basic skills and work readiness goals by eligible youth,

- Provide approved support services that cannot be paid for by other means, including HiSET exam fees, and
- Purchase DESE ABE/HiSET/ESOL seats and/or
- Purchase WIOA Occupational Skills Training through individual training account (ITA) contracts with approved providers that are aligned with our sector strategies and/or Pioneer Valley Blueprint priority and other critical occupations, and which support the youths' career pathway development as outlined in their individual service plan.

## Performance Period

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board will award WIOA Youth Program Provider contracts to entities that demonstrate an ability to effectively deliver and manage services as described herein. It is the expectation of the MHCWB that respondents will become proficient in their understanding of the WIOA Youth services, subsequent regulations, and other funding sources. All proposals must be comprehensive and address the full scope of services or demonstrate a relationship with other entities that together will deliver the full scope of services identified within this RFP.

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board anticipates funding grant agreements effective July 1, 2026– June 30, 2027. The proposer(s) selected will be awarded a twelve-month subaward contract for the fiscal year 2027, renewable for an additional twelve months for the fiscal year 2028, depending on a performance review and availability of funds. Proposals should reflect costs and program outcomes for the twelve months starting on July 1, 2026.

## Contract Type

Contracts executed as a result of this RFP process will be paid through cost-reimbursement. Contracts may be renewable for one additional year based on performance and funding. Final contracts will also be subject to any changes in legislation, regulations, or policies promulgated by the funding sources. The MHCWB reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, scope of services, performance standards, referral sources, and contract term, as it deems necessary.

## Eligible Respondents

The respondent may be a private, for-profit, or non-profit company or a government agency. Eligible bidders include:

- An Institution of higher education;
- Community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or workforce intermediary;
- Non-traditional public secondary schools, e.g., night or adult school, career or technical education school;
- Business organizations, including chambers of commerce;
- Labor organizations;
- A consortium of organizations;
- A private for-profit entity; or
- A government agency (i.e., Municipality).

Respondents may submit proposals in which subcontractors are identified to provide program components. Respondents may also identify organizations with which they will collaborate to enhance the project design. However, any proposal submissions from a collaboration of two or more entities should clearly provide the following information in the narrative portions of the proposal:

- Identify the lead agency for the collaborative partnership
- State the roles and responsibilities of each collaborator
- Include an organizational chart for each organization and for the collaborative
- Describe how funds will flow within the collaborative
- Identify the percentage of each partner's fiscal responsibility • Identify the qualified fiscal agent for the collaborative partnership.

**All subcontracting arrangements must be described in detail in the proposal and be included as a separate line item in the budget. Further, you must include a letter of commitment from the proposed financial subcontractor with your proposal.** The contract document with any sub-groups must be approved by MHHCWB prior to the final contract execution and is subject to all conditions and stipulations of WIOA, as well as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Successful respondents must demonstrate past experience with similar programs and achievement of successful outcomes; demonstrate ability to innovate; design and develop complex programs with multiple sources of funding; achieve, track, and report outcomes; meet government accounting and expense requirements; and offer a high quality of services to a diverse range of customers.

Any private for-profit entity considering responding to this RFP must understand that they are required to adhere to the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200. Department of Labor's (DOL) adoption of the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 2900.2 expands the definition of 'non-Federal entity' to include 'for-profit' and 'foreign' entities. As such, any private for-profit entity that is a direct grant recipient or sub-recipient of a DOL award must adhere to the Uniform Guidance. Procurement standards under the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.323(b), require that profit be negotiated separately from the price in addition to a cost analysis and/or price analysis. The MHHCWB will conduct such negotiations should a for-profit entity be selected. Records documenting or detailing the procurement history, including the negotiation and analysis of profit, will be maintained by all entities (2 CFR 300.318(h)(i)).

## SCOPE OF SERVICES

### Eligibility

Eligibility requirements for WIOA Youth programs are established by federal law to ensure that services are directed toward young people who face significant barriers to education and employment. All applicants must meet specific criteria related to age, school status, income, and the presence of one or more qualifying barriers. Providers are responsible for verifying and documenting each eligibility element prior to enrollment and must maintain complete, accurate records in accordance with WIOA regulations and MHHCWB policies.

The following sections outline the full eligibility requirements for Out-of-School Youth (OSY) and In-School Youth (ISY).

## Out-of-School Youth

Out-of-School Youth programs funded through this RFP must provide a comprehensive blend of education and training services, exposure to employment, quality work experience, to provide each youth participant with a recognized credential, personal stability, and an understanding of the requirements of the modern workplace. Hampden County residents must be granted priority for enrollment.

WIOA establishes specific eligibility criteria for Out-Of-School Youth to ensure that services are directed toward young adults who face significant barriers to employment and education. Providers must verify and document all eligibility criteria prior to enrollment. The following table summarizes the federal OSY requirements, including age, school status, income considerations, and qualifying barriers. All eligible youth must be between the ages of 16-24 years of age and face barriers to school completion or employment.

An Out-Of-School Youth is defined as an individual who is:

- Not attending any school (see definition in Attachment A);
- Not younger than 16 or older than 24 at the time of enrollment (participants may continue to receive services beyond the age of 24 once they are enrolled in the program); and Meets one or more of the following conditions:
  - School Dropout;
  - Within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter. The school year calendar is based on how a local school district defines its school year quarters.
  - Recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is low-income and basic skills deficient or an English language learner;
  - An offender (subject to the juvenile or adult justice system);
  - An individual experiencing homelessness, aged 16 to 24, who meets the criteria defined in sec. 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, a homeless child or youth aged 16 to 24 who meets the criteria defined in sec. 725(2) of the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act, or a runaway;
  - An individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care of kinship, guardianship, or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 677), or in an out-of-home placement.
  - Pregnant or parenting;
  - An individual with a disability;
  - Low-income\* individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment (WIOA sections 3(46) and 129(a)(1)(B))

## Low-Income

A low-income individual is one who:

- Receives, or in the past 6 months received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past 6 months has received, assistance through the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP), or the supplemental security income program established under Title XVI of the Social Security Act, or State or local income-based public assistance;
- Is in a family with a total income that does not exceed the higher of –
  - The poverty line, or
  - 70 percent of the lower living standard income level
- A homeless individual;
- A foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made;
- An individual with a disability whose own income meets the low-income level for eligibility purposes;
- Youth who reside in a High Poverty Area (defined as at least 25% poverty rate).

## Additional Eligibility criteria:

Eligible youth must be a citizen of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident alien, refugee, asylee, or parolee, or other immigrant authorized by the Attorney General to work in the U.S. As per federal law, all males age 18 and above must be registered as required with the Selective Service. For Female to Male Individuals – People who were assigned female at birth are not required to register with the Selective Service regardless of their current gender or transition status.

For Male to Female Individuals – People who were assigned male at birth are required to register with the Selective Service regardless of current gender or transition status.

## In-School Youth

In-School Youth (ISY) programs funded through this RFP must provide a combination of education and training services, exposure to employment, and additional supportive services in order to provide each youth participant with a recognized credential, personal stability, and an understanding of the requirements of the modern workplace. In-School Youth eligibility under WIOA is designed to support young people who are still enrolled in secondary education but require additional assistance to complete school, transition to postsecondary education, or enter the workforce. ISY participants must meet federal requirements related to age, school status, low-income status, and the presence of at least one qualifying barrier. Providers are responsible for verifying and documenting each eligibility element before enrollment.

In School Youth programs must work directly with or have representation at schools in the Hampden County region.

An In-School Youth is defined as “a youth who has not attained a high school diploma or equivalent and is attending school on a full-time basis.”

For this RFP, the target population, in-school youth (ISY), is defined as youth entering their junior or senior year in secondary education, including alternative and vocational schools, who are low-income and have at least one barrier to education and/or employment. \*

\*Under WIOA, an In-School Youth is an individual who is: Attending school; Not younger than 14 or older than 21 at the time of enrollment

#### Eligibility criteria for In-School youth:

- Citizenship/Work Eligible and Selective Service Compliant (see definitions on previous page)  
AND
- 14-21 years old
- Low Income\*
- Attending School

One or more of the following:

- Basic skills deficient
- English language learner
- An offender
- A homeless individual, a runaway
- In foster care (or aged out of foster care), a child is eligible for assistance under Sec. 477 of the Social Security Act, or a youth in an out-of-home placement.
- Pregnant or parenting
- A youth who is an individual with a disability
- An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment (not more than 5% allowed using this item)

\*A WIOA Youth participant will be considered low-income if any of the following is true:

- They are receiving public assistance (TAFDC, EAEDC, SNAP, SSI)
- Their family income is at or below 70% of the Lower Living Standard (LLS), or below the poverty line for a family of one
- They reside in a High Poverty Area- The Census Bureau defines a “poverty area” as a census tract where at least 25% of the residents are economically disadvantaged They have any of the following barriers:
- Homeless/Runaway (as defined in the McKinney Act)
- Foster Care
- They are in school and qualify for a free or reduced lunch program
- The Hampden County Workforce Board does not place residency restrictions for eligibility for WIOA Youth participants. However, providers must prioritize youth from the Hampden County Region for enrollment. Youth residing in an adjacent county must be approved by MHHCWB. All youth must be MA residents.

## Program Design Guidelines

### Program Design Framework and Related Services/MHHCWB Role

## MHHCWB LOCAL ROLES UNDER WIOA

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHHCWB) Inc., as the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Hampden County and WIOA Fiscal Agent: MHHCWB, as the WDB, will provide policy, guidance, and oversight for all WIOA activities. MHHCWB has appointed a Youth Council that is chartered to: Design a youth development system that meets the needs of Hampden County youth, select youth services providers, coordinate youth activities, and conduct oversight and evaluation of program activities of funded youth service providers.

Additionally, as the WIOA Fiscal Agent, MHHCWB will serve as the contract administrator for WIOA. In this capacity, MHHCWB will:

- Execute contracts with youth service providers and monitor program compliance
- Reimburse contractors pursuant to their WIOA contract agreements
- Issue incentive and support service payments to eligible youth pursuant to Hampden County policies
- Oversee issuance of Individual Training Accounts or On-the-Job Training contracts to youth between the ages of 18-24 who are assessed to need ABE/HiSET-GED/ ESOL and/or Occupational Skills Training and who would then be co-enrolled into the WIOA adult services component (approved ITAs include Registered Apprenticeships)
- Oversee and manage WIOA youth funds to purchase ABE/HiSET-GED/ESOL and/or
- Occupational Skills Training for youth on an individual referral basis
- Oversee and evaluate the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative performance of all funded youth services providers.

\*Must be contracts with approved providers with emphasis on those that are aligned with our sector strategies and/or Pioneer Valley Blueprint priority and other critical occupations and which support the youths' career pathway development as outlined in their individual service plan.

"Framework Design" services, as specified in the WIOA Rules and Regulations, will also be provided by MHHCWB in its role as the WIOA Fiscal Agent. These services will include:

- Overseeing intake, objective assessment, and referral activities leading to referral to programs funded through this RFP. Objective assessment will include a determination of academic and occupational skill levels, as well as the service needs of each youth.
- Approving eligibility determination for all WIOA youth participants; and
- Overseeing the development of an initial individual service strategy for each youth participant. The service provider selected through this RFP may modify the individual service strategies as needed.

Hampden County's One-Stop Career Centers: MassHire Springfield and MassHire Holyoke will:

- provide career, educational, and labor market information;
- deliver basic computer workshops;
- offer access to job opportunities, especially for out-of-school youth; and
- serve as an entry point for youth to access all WIOA-funded activities, as well as standalone projects funded through State grants and by the private sector.

Consistent with the intent of the WIOA legislation, all customers, including youth, must be able to access information and services through a One-Stop delivery system, and youth programs must develop and enhance linkages with the MassHire One-Stop Career Center system. This is consistent with the Hampden County Youth MOU. All service providers selected through this RFP must work in close cooperation with the two MassHire One-Stop Career Centers to build a comprehensive, integrated youth delivery system. Since a primary outcome for out-of-school youth is job placement, bidders are required to ensure that all appropriately prepared out-of-school youth register at a MassHire Career Center. A MHHCWB WIOA Title I Out-of-School Youth Vendor Referral Form will be used for this purpose.

### Program Hours

Out-of-School Programs must operate for at least 15 hours per week, not including work experiences.

In-School programs should be scheduled for no more than 20 hours per week during the summer. During the school year, the schedule of program activities must be appropriate to the target group, but generally should not exceed 15 hours per week.

**Proposals must identify the location where services will be provided and clear expectations regarding in-person program attendance.**

### Start/End Dates and Program Length

Programs should be designed to start on or after July 1, 2026, and to provide at least twelve (12) months of continuous programming. Both In-School and Out-of-School programs must operate year-round. Enrollees may remain in the program for more than twelve months if they continue to require assistance and support as identified in their Individual Service Strategy.

### Recruitment and Outreach

The Hampden County region is a mix of urban and suburban areas, with varied public transportation access. YPPs under this RFP must be able to market their services and attract WIOA-eligible youth in the Hampden County Region. The outreach and recruitment efforts of program providers should include, but not be limited to, identifying potentially eligible youth, working with parents and guardians to secure necessary documentation, and communicating with community organizations regarding recruitment efforts.

### Service Delivery System

YPPs must have a comprehensive assessment and service delivery strategy that includes an inventory of participant strengths, challenges, and career interests.

Below is the service delivery structure for WIOA youth programs in the Hampden County region:

- Eligibility determination – YPPs will conduct outreach, intake, initial assessment, and gathering of documentation. MHHCWB will review materials and determine if the youth is eligible for services.
- Objective assessment – YPPs will assess participant strengths, challenges, skill levels, work history, and career interest using objective tools. The objective assessment may include, but is not limited to, academic and occupational skills, work history, and service needs, and will be reflected in the initial case note. Participants must also purchase and administer Reading and Math assessments using the MAPT or TABE exams.
- Development of an individual service strategy - an individual service strategy for each youth will be developed by staff from the selected youth provider(s). In general, the service strategy will include identification of a career goal based on the results of the youth’s objective assessment and layout of the planned service path for the youth, with an identification of which of the fourteen program elements will be needed by the youth to achieve their educational, training, or employment goal. MHHCWB requires the use of labor market information to inform the development of the individual service strategy and the selected career pathway. Youth with disabilities must have reasonable accommodations included as a part of the individual service strategy.

## Program Elements

WIOA places an emphasis on the development of Career Pathways designed to transition youth from education to the workforce. Career Pathways are an integrated collection of programs and services intended to develop a youth’s core academic, technical, and employability skills, provide them with continuous education, training, and placement into high-demand jobs.

The term “Career Pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- Align with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the state or the regional economy involved;
- Prepare individuals to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships;
- Include counseling to support an individual in achieving education and career goals;
- Include, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- Organize education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates their educational and career advancement to the extent practicable;
- Enable an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- Help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

As WIOA emphasizes Career Pathways, MHHCWB is also prioritizing the development of regionally focused Career Pathways for all job seekers (regardless of age/education level). The priority industries are advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and social services, construction/trades, and education. For

this RFP, preference will be given to applicants who develop innovative Career Pathway-focused program designs using the 14 WIOA elements described below.

Additionally, WIOA aims to maximize opportunities for competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. Pre-employment transition services must be made available to youth with disabilities who need such services. Pre-employment transition services for youth include job exploration, work-based learning experiences, workplace readiness training, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary education programs, and instruction in self-advocacy. All applicants must include components in their program design to develop Career Pathways.

### **WIOA ELEMENTS**

WIOA Youth program elements may be provided by the selected WIOA Youth Program Provider, a subcontractor, or a partner agency. Respondents to this Request for Proposals should plan to present a program concept that includes each of the following program elements, either directly provided by the applicant or indirectly through referrals to other organizations/resources. Most, if not all, program elements must be offered in the Hampden County Region, particularly in high-poverty areas. Services that are offered outside of the Hampden County area must be justifiable and unique opportunities only available outside of the Hampden County Region. Hampden County participants must be provided transportation assistance to travel to program services located outside of the Hampden County area. Note that elements that are bolded are required elements for every Hampden County WIOA Youth enrollee.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate
3. **Paid and unpaid work experiences\* that have as a component academic and occupational education**
4. **Occupational skills training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved**
5. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate
6. **Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peercentered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate**
7. **Supportive services - examples may include: Linkages to community services; Assistance with transportation; Assistance with childcare and dependent care; Assistance with housing; Referrals to medical services; and Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools. Provision of additional services that will support youth with disabilities**

8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of 12 months
  9. Follow-up services for 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate
  10. **Financial Literacy Education**
  11. Entrepreneurial Skills Training
  12. **Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services**
  13. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training  
Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
- The work experience component outlined in the required program activities may include summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the year, on-the-job training, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeship, or paid/unpaid internships. Applicants for this RFP are encouraged to make connections with the private sector employers who will provide opportunities for employment following program completion. If the proposed design requires subsidized wages, it is expected that wages and fringe benefits (Worker's Compensation and FICA) will be paid directly by the vendor.

In accordance with 20 CFR §618.610, YPPs must track program funds spent on paid and unpaid work experiences, including wages, mandated fringe benefits related to youth wages, and staff costs for the development and management of work experiences, and report such expenditures as part of the local WIOA youth financial reporting. The proposed budget should specify work experience expenses, which must, at a minimum, total 30% of the total budget.

Allowable program expenditures for the work experience include:

- Wages/stipends paid to youth in the work experience; (stipend policies must be included with RFP response);
- Employability skill/job readiness training to prepare youth for work experience;
- Staff time working to identify and develop a work experience opportunity, including staff time spent working with employers to identify and develop the work experience;
- Staff time spent evaluating the work experience;
- Participant work experience orientation sessions;
- Classroom training or the required academic component directly related to the work
- Orientations for the employer

## WORK EXPERIENCE and SUMMER PROGRAMMING FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH:

In-School YPPs under this RFP should provide Driver's Education, or other relevant training to all participants as a part of work readiness training and/or work experience. Work experience may be delivered in the summer or year-round but all In-School YPPs must offer year-round services to program enrollees.

In-School YPPs must present a program of summer activities that will effectively provide a "bridge" between school years; provide enrollees with exposure to the world of work; and connect with school-to-work and/or tech prep programs.

Elements of the summer component may include areas for utilizing work readiness skills, improving academic performance, and employability skills.

Occupational skills training: 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. All Hampden County Out of School Youth participants with a high school diploma or equivalent must be enrolled in an occupational skills training leading to an industry-recognized credential. WIOA Youth may be granted an Individual Training Account fund to enroll in a Hampden County approved training course available on the Eligible Training Provider List. ALL ITAs are subject to funding availability.

Education concurrently w/workforce preparation: Integrated education and training that occur concurrently and contextually with the workforce for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. This element refers to the concurrent delivery of workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway.

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 books, fees, school supplies, transportation, and legal aid. Supportive services may be provided through the MHHCWB Supportive Services policy and do not need to be included in the proposed budget.

Adult Mentoring (12-month min): Participants receive adult mentoring for a period of not less than 12 months that connect to the youth's goals.

Follow-up Services (12 Months): Follow-up services must be provided to all participating youth for a minimum of twelve (12) months after exit from the program unless the participant declines to receive follow-up services or cannot be located or contacted. Follow-up and Retention are both categories for services that are provided to an enrollee after the enrollee has been officially exited from the Hampden County WIOA Youth grant. Each category comprises two subdivisions: 1) contact, and 2) the provision of services.

Follow-up is the overall category that comprises communication with and services to a former enrollee that may assist that enrollee to excel in the world of work. Ideally, YPPs should contact follow-up participants, at a minimum, on a monthly basis, and the results should be recorded in monthly follow-up notes. Follow-up services may include, but are not limited to, career planning, counseling, job

development, job search, needs assessment, outcome enhancement services, support services, and support service referrals.

Retention also comprises communication and services, but is focused on assisting the former enrollee to retain his/her employment, schooling, or other related outcome. Once a placement has been made, monthly follow-up notes should provide an update on the status of the placement.

For both, contact must be documented in the statewide MOSES system as well as in the former enrollee's program case file. These two post-graduate categories emerge from the overall emphasis on a customer's learning self-reliance and the life-long skills to perform his/her own job searches and maintain his/her employment. Programs should provide a link to career/employment assistance.

**Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling:** Individualized counseling, which includes drug and alcohol abuse, mental health counseling, and referrals to partner programs.

**Financial Literacy Education:** Supports the ability of participants to create budgets, learn how to manage spending, credit, and debt.

**Entrepreneurial Skills Training:** Provides the basics for starting a small business. This training does not count towards measurable skills training or an industry-recognized training based on this training alone.

**Labor Market Services:** Participants receive access to career counseling, career exploration, career awareness, and the use of labor market tools. Labor Market Information must be utilized in the initial Individualized Service Strategy to determine the career plan at the time of enrollment.

**Transition to Postsecondary Education:** Participants receive access to job exploration counseling, workbased learning experiences, instruction in self-advocacy, work readiness training, and assistance with college applications.

**Post-secondary preparation and transition activities:** Activities that prepare youth for postsecondary education after attaining a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

## Data Management

The Massachusetts One-Stop Employment System (MOSES) is a web-based, state-managed database system that supports statewide employment programs, including WIOA Youth. The MOSES system records and tracks all participant information, including enrollment, career plans, case notes, activities, services rendered, and outcomes achieved.

Funded providers will be responsible for submitting documents to MHCWB necessary for MOSES data entry. Timely submission of documentation is expected.

Funded contractors must maintain a secure system for paper and electronic records. Personally Identifiable Information training must be provided to all staff at least annually.

## Career Pathways

WIOA places a strong emphasis on career pathways. YPPs should apply a career pathway approach throughout their service delivery model. Career Pathways are defined as a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- Align with the skill needs of industries in the state or regional economy;
- Prepare an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options;
- Include counseling to support an individual in achieving their education and career goals;
- Include, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- Organize education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable.
- Enable an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
- Help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
- Limits on Proposed Enrollments & Student-Teacher Ratio

Applicants may propose any slot number, and programs should be designed for the maximum number of slots that can be served with the available funding. However, depending upon assessed labor market demand and proposals submitted, a final award may fund programs at higher or lower enrollment levels than those proposed.

Student-teacher ratios should not exceed 15 to 1. Volunteers to assist regular instructional staff may be utilized to achieve this ratio if a volunteer program exists that provides training and supervision to volunteers. Designs that ensure more than one staff person is always available in a classroom are preferred.

Please note also that the MHCWB will give positive consideration to program designs that provide comprehensive support to fewer students in order to maximize the likelihood of student success.

## PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES, REPORTING, AND TRACKING

### WIOA Youth Performance Measures

Under WIOA, achievement of measurable performance outcomes is a critical expectation of the YPPs. The chart below lists the current FY26 WIOA Youth performance measures for the region. Performance measures for FY27, the period covered by this RFP, are subject to change. WIOA Youth-funded in-school and out-of-school YPPs work together with the Youth Services Operator staff to ensure regional goals are met.

WIOA Performance Measure	Definition	FY26 Goal
Entered Employment/Edu/Training	Placement in Employment, Education, or Training (2nd quarter after exit)	64.7%
Employment/Edu/Training Retention	Placement in Employment, Education, or Training (4th quarter after exit)	79.0%
Credential Rate	Credential Rate (within 1 year after exit)	77.2%
Measurable Skills Gain	Measurable Skills Gain (real-time measure)	45.5%
Median Earnings	Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit)	\$4,200

Descriptions of each performance measure:

Youth Employment and Education rate 2nd quarter after exit	The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program.
Youth Employment and Education rate 4th quarter after exit	The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
Median earnings 2nd quarter after exit	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

<p>Credential Attainment</p>	<p>The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a</p>
	<p>recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program</p>
<p>Measurable Skill Gains</p>	<p>The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.</p> <p>Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;</li> <li>• Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;</li> <li>• Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards;</li> <li>• Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or</li> <li>• Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills, as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledgebased exams.</li> </ul>

## File Records, Retention, and Ownership

**Selected YPPs must retain, secure, and ensure the accuracy of all program files and records**, whether related to businesses or participants, in compliance with federal, state, and WIOA requirements. Records must be retained for at least three (3) years after the submittal of the final closeout expenditure report for that funding period. Case files must contain a variety of documentation, including, but not limited to: program eligibility, suitability, assessment data; regular updates (minimally every 30 days); progress reports, and case notes. Selected respondents must allow local, state, and federal representatives access to all records, program materials, staff, and participants.

## Oversight, Evaluation, and Planning

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board will monitor and evaluate selected respondents to determine if youth participants are receiving the most comprehensive, high-caliber services. Monitoring is also used to ensure program compliance and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the service strategies. The MHHCWB is also required under WIOA to monitor the WIOA YPPs annually. Therefore, all program and fiscal records must be maintained locally. External monitoring and evaluation may also be conducted periodically by the U.S. Department of Labor, the Massachusetts Department of Career Services, and any other agencies that provide funds used by the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board to contract for services in the area's workforce system.

## Accessibility and Equal Opportunity

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board is committed to equal programmatic and physical access to services for all customers. All awardees must ensure equal opportunity to all individuals. No individual in the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board regional area shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or other funded programs or activities because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, English proficiency, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or belief. All successful bidders are expected to demonstrate full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and all other equal opportunity laws.

## SOLICITATION, PROCESS, AND TERMS

### Period of Solicitation

This RFP is being released on February 2, 2026. The deadline to submit a response(s) to the RFP is Wednesday, March 27th, no later than 5:00 p.m. (EST).

### RFP Inquiries, Questions, and Answers

The primary mode of communication between the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board and potential bidders will occur via <https://masshirehcb.com/about/funding-opportunities/>. Questions and

Answers and any RFP amendments will be posted on the website. It is the bidder's responsibility to check the website page frequently to stay apprised throughout the process.

MHHCWB Staff members are unable to provide technical assistance during the application process. Please do not contact staff directly with any questions. All questions pertaining to the RFP must be received in writing via email at [RFP@masshirehcb.com](mailto:RFP@masshirehcb.com). Please include "WIOA YOUTH RFP" in the subject line. Only those questions directed to this email will be answered. All questions must be received by April 3, 2026. Questions will not be answered over the phone or in person.

### Bidder's Conference

MHHCWB will host a Bidders Conference, via webinar, for all prospective respondents to this RFP. At this session, MHHCWB staff will review program information, key proposal requirements, contract terms and conditions, and respond to questions.

The Bidders Conference will be held:

March 11, 2026

9:00 PM – 10:00 A.M. Via ZOOM <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89086303668>

Meeting ID: 890 8630 3668

A brief period will be reserved at the Bidders Conference for additional questions to be submitted in writing. Every effort will be made at the conference to answer questions submitted that day; however, all questions will be answered and posted on the website. No answers are final until posted on the website.

### Letter of Intent

Please submit a letter of intent (Attachment A) to the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board by 5:00 pm EST on March 20, 2026, to [RFP@masshirehcb.com](mailto:RFP@masshirehcb.com). Submission of a letter of intent is required. A bidder that fails to submit a letter of intent will not be considered.

## Proposal Review and Evaluation Process

Applications will be evaluated by a team of reviewers, which may include MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board members, WIOA-mandated partners, outside experts, and staff. An entity's failure to submit a complete proposal or to respond in whole or in part to RFP requirements may cause the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board to deem the proposal non-responsive and thus ineligible for review.

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board review team will conduct an in-depth evaluation of all responsive proposals based upon the criteria herein. Before its final funding decision, the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board may also: 1) meet with representatives of the responding entity to discuss the proposed program and budget; 2) identify and/or negotiate program or budget changes the responding entity must make as a condition of funding; and 3) identify other documentation the entity must provide as a condition of funding.

After analyzing all of the above data, the review team will select the successful respondent. Entities that fail to meet the evaluation criteria specified herein, or proposals that do not meet the service needs of youth in this region, will not receive further consideration for funding. Failure to meet evaluation criteria can include, but is not limited to, non-responsive language in the submission, failure to clearly address all areas in the project narrative as required, lack of required documentation, and proposing programs that do not address the specific needs of the population(s) being targeted.

Potential applicants should consider their capacity and program concept in relation to all requirements. It is the applicant's responsibility to thoroughly review all grant regulations and guidance before preparing an application for funding to ensure they have the ability to comply with all federal requirements and grant regulations.

## Guidance on Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI)

Gen AI models can be useful in some cases, but may produce errors or result in text that is overly generic and inauthentic; these could put your application at a disadvantage during review. If you choose to use Gen AI tools, we strongly encourage you to review the text to ensure that the application reflects your local context, is specific about your proposed project activities, and is feasible for the budget and period of performance.

## Right to Contact Applicants for Clarification

MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board reserves the right to contact applicants for clarification or negotiation, to extend or revise any deadline, and to reject or accept any proposals in whole or part, if deemed to be in the best interest of the WIOA Youth program. MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board may negotiate the terms of the contract before issuing the award.

## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals that do not meet minimum standards will be considered non-responsive. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board is not required to contract with the entity receiving the highest score as a result of the proposal review process, as more particularly described below.

All proposals will be scored according to the evaluation criteria set forth below. Additional information may be considered by reviewers when scoring proposals, such as interviews, questions, and answers after the written proposal.

	Point Value
Organizational Structure/Capacity/Background	20
Service Strategy	40
Past Performance and Planned Outcomes	20
Budget/Budget Narrative	20
Total Points Available	100

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

### Submittal Procedure and Format

1. To be considered for funding, applicants must submit their Letter of Intent and proposal via email to [RFP@masshirehwcwb.com](mailto:RFP@masshirehwcwb.com). All applicants will receive an email response verifying receipt of the proposal.

Letters of Intent must be submitted by Wednesday, March 20, 2026, by 5:00 p. m. (EST). Completed RFP responses must be submitted by Wednesday, April 15, 2026, by 12:00 p.m. (EST).

PROPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE AND TIME ARE LATE AND WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. It is the bidder's responsibility to ensure responses are received by the date and time listed above. "Technical issues" will not be a sufficient reason for late responses.

All proposals must be organized and assembled as described in this Section. Please submit the proposal in this order:

Attachment B: Cover Page

Attachment C: Proposal Summary Sheet

Attachment D: Partnership Chart (if a partnership application)

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with partners (if a partnership application)

Narrative Response (No more than 14 pages)

Budget and Budget Narrative (Excel document)

Organization Chart- showing how the proposed program fits in with the larger organization

Resumes or Summaries/Job Descriptions of Key Personnel

Attachment E: Fiscal Questionnaire

If applicable, a list of Board Members (names, business mailing address, affiliation, e-mail, and phone numbers)

IRS W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certifications

If applicable, current Determination Letter from IRS verifying the organization is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3)

Certificate of Good Standing (from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue at [www.mass.gov/dor](http://www.mass.gov/dor))

Bidders who do not pay taxes in Massachusetts shall submit a certificate of good standing or other similar documentation from a state regulatory agency indicating that the bidder is current on tax payments and filings.

Copy of the most recent audited financial statement including audits under Uniform Guidance, if applicable Attachment F:

Signed Statement of Compliance and Disclaimer

Attachment G: Certificate of Lobbying Activities- if applying for \$100,000 or more (Link to pdf included)

## General Instructions

The application must be signed by the President, CEO, or equivalent person with legal signature authority of the organization. Applicants must follow these general instructions when preparing and submitting their responses:

Submit response as a single PDF document, except for Budget and Budget Narrative, which should be submitted in EXCEL format.

- 8 1/2 x 11 letter-size paper
- Numbered pages
- One-inch margins
- Single-spaced
- Minimum 11-point font
- Narrative Questions

The narrative response section of the proposal should be no more than 15 pages. If applying for both In-School and Out-of-School, please complete separate narratives for each. The narrative(s) should address the following questions:

## Organizational Structure/Capacity, and Background (20 points)

1. Briefly describe your organization and its experience with the provision of education and/or training services to the eligible youth population.
2. Indicate the particular youth service backgrounds and qualifications of staff that your agency will assign to provide the services under this RFP.
3. Describe how your agency's staff development policies and activities will ensure that the staff
4. Working on this project have the necessary qualifications to meet youth enrollee needs.
5. MHHCWB strives to support organizations that place a high value on employee retention; please
6. Provide your organization's turnover rates, salary bands, and a summary of benefits.
7. Explain how your mission and other programs align with this funding opportunity.

8. Describe program strategies or approaches that demonstrate innovative, flexible, or creative in-service delivery.
9. Describe your experience in working with special populations (i.e., individuals with disabilities, individuals with basic skills deficiency, limited English speakers, highly educated immigrants, veterans, individuals with criminal backgrounds, and recipients of public assistance).
10. Describe your experience working with youth with barriers to employment and other community partners to ensure access to and provide services promptly.
11. Describe your organization's experience in delivering trauma-informed practices to youth in the workforce setting.

## Service Strategy (40 points)

### Program Structure

1. Identify the number and targeted population of youth for your program. Provide specific background information to demonstrate that there are sufficient numbers in this target population to achieve your program's proposed enrollment goal.
2. For In-School programs, please indicate what grade(s) the program will be focused on. Include hours of program activities and staffing structure.
3. For Out-of-School programs, identify the staffing structure and the weekly schedule for the project.
4. Will the proposed services be in a new program or will they be integrated into an existing program that your agency is already operating?
5. Identify the specific locations where each component will be provided, including accessibility by public transportation. Describe the program space(s). Indicate whether summer activities will be different from year-round activities and if so, how.

### Recruitment and Outreach (Marketing)

1. Describe your recruitment and outreach plan to recruit the eligible youth population, including what transportation assistance will be provided for specialized services outside of the Hampden County area, if necessary, the organizations and audiences with which you will communicate, and the tools and methods you will use. Describe potential challenges that may arise in engaging and enrolling the youth population.
2. Indicate how your project will incorporate any of the Hampden County priority areas initiatives outlined at the beginning of the RFP.

### Comprehensive Assessment

1. Explain your approach to providing customer-centered services, including your organization's
2. trauma-informed practices.
3. Describe how participant strengths and needs will be assessed, including formal and informal assessments.
4. Describe how your assessment process provides an objective assessment of each youth participant and includes a review of academic and occupational skills levels, service needs, and strengths to build individual service strategies for each youth.

5. Describe the target population's barriers to accessing employment and education services. How will the proposed program address those barriers? Describe how supportive service needs will be identified and administered throughout the program duration.

### Career Planning and Case Management

1. Describe the process for developing and managing an individual service strategy plan, including goal progress tracking and how modifications will be made when necessary. The individual service strategy plan should include short-term and long-term employment, educational, and personal goals.
2. Discuss your methods of instruction for job readiness and soft skills development. Discuss how you will develop goals and measure individual achievements in each area.
3. Describe your approach to developing work experience opportunities that would align with the
4. Youth participants' career goals and aspirations are outlined in the individual service strategy plan.
5. How will the program educate participants about a range of occupations and career pathways in a target industry and the required experience, education, and training necessary for such occupations?

### Data Management

1. Describe how your organization securely manages participant information, including participant documents and electronic files.
2. Identify the staff involved in the management of participant data.
3. What is the organization's capacity to submit participant information, participant basic information, enrollment, career plans, case notes, activities, services rendered, and outcomes achieved? Describe your organization's quality assurance process to ensure the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of data submission.

### Employer and Sector-Based Partnerships

1. Describe your employer engagement strategies, including current relationships with businesses, and how they will be leveraged to create work experience opportunities for youth.
2. Describe how your employer engagement strategies will align with businesses' workforce needs and priorities in the Hampden County region.

### Career Pathways:

1. Describe your proposed career pathway(s) in Hampden County region.
2. Identify the occupation(s) at the center of the proposed career pathway. Include contextualized education or occupational training, including partnerships, tools, or resources will be utilized in Hampden County.
3. Describe the labor market information that supports the selected career pathway(s)
4. Describe sector-based partnerships that include a wide range of stakeholders, including but not limited to employers, education partners, and community-based organizations.

### Required WIOA Program Elements:

In order to provide youth with access to a broad range of services, or the required 14 WIOA Youth elements, WIOA necessitates forming a robust system of services and providers. Please describe how the program will provide, either in-house, through collaboration, or through referral mechanisms, access to each of the 14 WIOA service elements, including how the program will support participants in achieving skills gain.

Please answer the following questions regarding your organization's approach in delivering the required WIOA program elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention: Describe how participants will be supported to complete academic and occupational credentials.
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services: Describe academic services that will be made available to youth who have not attained a High School diploma or equivalent.
3. Paid and unpaid work experience: Describe what paid and unpaid work experiences will be offered through the program. Proposed work experiences should consider the range of skills and interests of the participants.
4. Occupational skills training: Identify the main Industry Recognized Credential(s) and the corresponding occupational skills training, including any occupational skills training partners.
5. Education concurrently w/workforce preparation: Describe any integrated education programming that occurs concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation.
6. Leadership development: Describe leadership opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors.
7. Supportive Services: Describe how your organization will identify participant support services needs, submit requests, and ensure proper expenditure of funds.
8. Adult Mentoring (12-month min): Describe your approach to mentor recruitment, especially in Hampden County Priority Areas.
9. Follow-Up Services (12 Months): How will you maintain follow-up contact and assist the youth who leave your program, both the youth who drop out of the program as well as the successful program graduates?
10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: Describe how youth participants will be connected to specialized individual counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse and mental health counseling.
11. Financial Literacy Education: Describe the financial literacy services provided to participants, including but not limited to budgeting, setting financial goals, savings, credit, and overcoming debt.
12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training: Describe the entrepreneurial program services available related to the basics of starting a small business. Services may include, but are not limited to, the entrepreneurial mindset, critical problem solving, business plan development, project management, and marketing.
13. Labor market Services: Explain how Hampden County and Massachusetts labor market data will be utilized in the development of career plans. Explain your approach to working with industry sectors, including Hampden County Priority areas and STEM-related fields.
14. Post-secondary preparation and transition activities: Describe the transition support that will be provided to the participants upon training or school graduation. Describe the post-secondary preparation activities that will be provided.

## Past Performance & Outcomes (20 points)

WIOA has specific outcomes designated for its Youth programs, primarily placement into employment or post-secondary education or training, enhanced by educational attainments. These have been outlined on the preceding pages of this RFP.

### For organizations that have previously received WIOA Youth funds:

Referring to these performance measures, describe your agency's previous performance, over the past two years, with the target youth group.

- Share what changes or improvements your organization would implement if selected to receive WIOA youth funds again.

### For organizations that have NOT previously received WIOA Youth funds:

Describe your agency's performance managing similar youth programming as closely as possible to these measures: education, employment, and work readiness preparation. Include supporting data that demonstrates your organization's success and ability to deliver results.

### For all applicants:

1. Describe your organization's previous experience administering federal, state, and private grants.
2. Explain your organization's approach to meeting deadlines and addressing any past compliance challenges, if applicable.
3. Detail the steps your organization has taken to enhance program efficiency, ensure compliance, and support continuous improvement.

## Financial Structure and Fiscal Plan (20 points)

1. Describe the administrative and financial management capabilities of the organization. What are the qualifications of the organization's key program management and financial staff, and to what extent will they be involved with this project?
2. Provide the organization's total annual budget amount and list the top five funding sources for the current fiscal year, including funder, amount, and project funded. Estimate what percentage of your overall organization's work would be represented by this contract?
3. If you are proposing a subcontracting model, do you have experience in managing subcontracts for services, including monitoring of subcontractors? How do you ensure proper fiscal oversight and accountability of subcontractors?
4. Describe your experience with cost reimbursement contracts. Describe how you will financially support the costs of doing business until an invoice can be submitted and paid. How will you provide and fund the start-up costs of the program? (Start-up costs are allowable with WIOA funds, although additional funds may be provided by the bidder.)

5. Describe the agency's payroll system and accounting software, including internal controls for accuracy and validity. What is the method for documenting employee time and expenses?
6. If the entity is for-profit, identify the profit percentage built into the proposed budget, and describe the risk and other factors taken into consideration to arrive at this percentage.
7. Profits earned will be subject to negotiations as detailed under Section 3.D.
8. Leveraged funds are not required. However, we are interested in whether the bidder has ideas for securing additional funds to support WIOA Youth services or has additional funds internally that can be utilized for these services. If so, please describe it here. These funds can include cash contributions, staff effort, space, fee-for-service, or other revenue generation, and in-kind contributions. In answering, list each source of leveraged resources, the dollar value, and the function of each leveraged resource, and whether the funds are secured, pending, anticipated, or ideas.
9. Describe the respondent's resource development experience and capacity to access various sources of funding to operate high-quality programs.

## Budget Instructions

The budget should be submitted in Excel format, utilizing the provided template. If you are applying for both In-School and Out-of-School programs, please fill out a separate budget form for each.

### General instructions for completing the budget forms:

All tabs of the WIOA Youth Budget and WIOA Cost Worksheets must be completed.

## LIMITATIONS, DISCLAIMERS, AND ASSURANCES

### Limitations

Hampden County Regional Employment Board d/b/a MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHHCWB) shall not pay for any costs incurred by the applicant agencies in the completion of this RFP. Submission of an RFP does not in any way obligate the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board to award a contract. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board reserves the right to accept or reject any applications, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board reserves the right to correct any error(s) and/or make changes to this solicitation as it deems necessary. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board may require successful applicants to participate in contract negotiations prior to contract finalization. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board shall reserve the right to withdraw or reduce the amount of an award or to terminate, with or without cause, any contract entered into as a result of this RFP process.

### Disclaimers

All contract awards by the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, pursuant to this RFP, are contingent upon the availability of funds. Respondents are liable for any and all costs incurred prior to final authorization by the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board and the execution of a contract with the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board.

The MHCWB also reserves the right to:

Rescind an award and/or reallocate the funding to another applicant should the successful respondent fail to execute its grant agreement in a timely fashion.

- Increase funding levels for any or all agencies selected pursuant to this RFP, if additional funds become available, based on agency performance, effectiveness, and other details;
- Change and amend as necessary its policies or procedures governing the delivery or scope of services described herein;
- Assess the risk that any recent, current, or potential litigation, court action, investigation, audit, bankruptcy, receivership, financial insolvency, merger, acquisition, or other event might have on an organization's ability to operate a proposed program.

#### Right to File an Appeal

After the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board completes its review of all proposals submitted in response to this RFP, the MHCWB will notify all applicants in writing of the status of their proposal and whether or not they have been selected as a proposed Youth Services Operator. Parties who submit proposals that are not selected as proposed Youth Services Operators may appeal the decision of the MHCWB in accordance with the applicable provisions of this RFP. Appeals may only be based upon a claim that the MHCWB has failed in any material respect to follow the selection process outlined in this RFP. As stated in the RFP, the MHCWB is not obligated to select a proposed YPP's proposal that receives the highest score based upon the application of the proposal review scoring criteria. Proposed YPPs may be selected based upon a more comprehensive review and analysis that shall consider the results of the proposal review scoring criteria, interviews, if conducted, geographic access, and the overall qualifications of the party submitting the proposal. Generalized allegations of impropriety or dissatisfaction with the results of the process are not grounds for appeal.

An unsuccessful bidder who wishes to appeal a decision must file an appeal in writing within 10 business days of the date of the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board's notice to unsuccessful proposers. The appeal statement must fully state in writing the grounds for the appeal in detail and shall be based solely upon the alleged failure of the MHCWB to follow in any material respect the selection process outlined in this RFP. Appeal request statements must be sent by overnight mail or delivered in person. Appeals of the funding decision may be filed with Steve Trueman, MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, 1441 Main St., Springfield, MA 01103.

If an appeal is filed in accordance with the requirements of this RFP, the Complaint Officer shall proceed as follows:

- The Complaint Officer shall make a written determination within twenty (20) days of receipt of the appeal.

- The Complaint Officer may choose to make a determination based solely on the information included in the case file or conduct further investigation before issuing a written determination.
- If the Complaint Officer has made a written request to the appellant (or the appellant's authorized representative) for additional information, the twenty (20) day period does not begin until the requested information has been received by the Complaint Officer. If the Complaint Officer is unable to contact the appellant for the purposes of obtaining additional information needed to resolve an appeal, a written request for information must be sent via certified mail or through some other form of communication where receipt can be verified. If an appellant does not respond, the Complaint Officer must inform the appellant in writing that the matter is considered resolved and the appeal denied.
- The Complaint Officer may also choose to resolve the appeal by convening a local hearing. Only the Complaint Officer or the authorized Complaint Officer backup may preside at a local complaint hearing. If the Complaint Officer deems that a hearing is necessary, the Complaint Officer will notify the parties (in writing) that the matter has been scheduled for a formal hearing. The notice must inform the parties of certain conditions of the hearing process that include:
  - The date, time, and location of the hearing;
  - Instruction that the Complaint Officer will conduct and regulate the course of the hearing to assure full consideration of all relevant issues and that actions necessary to ensure an orderly hearing are followed; and
  - Instruction that the Complaint Officer must rule on the introduction of evidence\* and afford the parties to present, examine, and cross-examine witnesses.

For clarity, any hearing conducted by the Complaint Officer is an administrative hearing that is not conducted in the same manner as a judicial hearing.

Technical rules of evidence do not apply. It is up to the Complaint Officer to follow principles and procedures that are designed to assure credible evidence that can be tested through cross-examination. The Complaint Officer's written determination shall include a specific reference to the appellant's right to appeal the written determination, including the requirement that any appeal by the appellant of the Complaint Officer's written determination must be submitted for a state level appeal and/or hearing in writing within ten (10) business days of receipt of the local determination made by the Complaint Officer.

### Decision of the Board

If the Complaint Officer decides in favor of the appellant, the Department of Career Services, in the exercise of its authority pursuant to the Uniform Circular 2.CFR 200 and as designated State Work Force Agency and overseer of the Massachusetts Workforce Development System, designates the following options as sole remedies in the event an appeal is decided in favor of the appellant:

Rebid the procurement of the Youth Services Operator in compliance with the requirements of WIOA, the Hampden County Procurement Rules, and Department of Career Services policy (101.DCS 03-105);  
or

Re-panel an entirely new group of raters and bid reviewers representative of the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board and business partners as new reviewers of the original bid proposals/documents (only) and render a decision accompanied by full supporting documentation.

### Right to State-Level Appeal

If the local Complaint Officers' determination issued to the appellant does not resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the appellant, the appellant may request a state-level appeal and/or formal appeal hearing in writing within 10 business days of the date of the denial. The request for appeal and/or formal appeal hearing must be sent to:

Office of the Director, Massachusetts Workforce Development Board 100 Cambridge Street 5th Floor  
Boston, MA 0211

If the appellant chooses to request an appeal without specifically requesting an appeal hearing, the State Board, or its designee (Authorized State Official - ASO), may decide to either make a determination based solely on the information included in the case file or conduct further investigation and issue a written determination without scheduling a formal hearing.

In either case, the State Board/ASO must submit a written determination to the appellant within 30 days of receipt of the original appeal request, or 30 days after having received additional information from further investigation, or 30 days after a formal hearing request. If the State Board/ASO has made a written request for information to the appellant or the appellant's authorized representative, and they do not respond within the given time frame, the appeal is considered resolved.

If the State Board/ASO deems that a formal hearing is necessary or if the appellant specifically requests such a hearing, the State Board/ASO will notify the parties in writing that the matter has been scheduled for a formal hearing. The notice must inform the parties of the following conditions of the hearing process:

### Formal Hearing Process

The notice must inform the parties of the following conditions of the hearing process:

The date, time, and location of the hearing.

Instruction that the State Board/ASO will conduct and regulate the course of the hearing to ensure full consideration of all relevant issues, and that actions necessary to ensure an orderly hearing are followed.

Instruction that the State Board/ASO must rule on the introduction of evidence\* and afford the parties the opportunity to present, examine, and cross-examine witnesses.

For clarity, it must be noted that an administrative hearing is not the same as a Court of Law. Technical rules of evidence do not apply. It is up to the State Board/ASO to follow principles and procedures that are designed to assure credible evidence that can be tested through cross-examination.

In conjunction with the hearing process, the State Board/ASO:

- May decide to make a determination based on the information included in the case file or investigate further prior to the formal hearing.
- May decide to conduct a hearing on more than one appellant if the issues are related.
- May permit (at his/her discretion) the participation of interested parties (amicus curae) with respect to specific legal or factual issues relevant to the complaint/appeal.
- May choose to conduct the hearing at a single location convenient to all parties (preferred) or, if that would represent a hardship for one or more parties, the State Hearing Official may elect to conduct the hearing by telephone conference call.
- Must conduct the hearing and issue a written determination to the appellant, the respondent, and any other participating interested parties within 30 days from the date the hearing was requested.

The State Board/ASO's written determination must include:

- the results of the State-level investigation;
- conclusions reached on the appeal;
- an explanation as to why the decision was upheld or not upheld; Decision of State Board
- Should the state board decide in favor of the appellant, in the exercise of its authority, the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board (MWDB) will remand decisions on appeals of the Lead Operator of Youth Services selections to the Department of Career Services for further action as the overseer of the Massachusetts Workforce Development System.

The Department of Career Services (DCS), in the exercise of its authority pursuant to the Uniform Circular 2.CFR 200 and as designated State Workforce Agency (SWA) and overseer of the Massachusetts Workforce Development System, designates the following local options as remedies to appeal orders remanded by the Massachusetts Workforce Development Board to DCS for Action:

- Re-bid the procurement of the Youth Services operator in compliance with the requirements of WIOA and MHCWB's procurement rules.
- Re-panel an entirely new group of rates and bid reviewers representative of the WIOA MHCWB and business partners as new reviewers of the original bid proposals/documents and render a decision accompanied by full supporting documentation.
- A decision under this state appeal process is final and may not be appealed to the U.S. Secretary of Labor. In the absence of a timely and properly submitted written protest, no party responding to this RFP shall be eligible for any remedy.

## Disallowed Costs and Cancellations

Successful bidders must accept liability for all aspects of any Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program and other state and federal programs conducted under contract with the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board. Successful bidders will be liable for any disallowed costs or illegal expenditures of funds or program operations conducted. The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board reserves the right to cancel or alter an award if new state or federal regulations or policy make it necessary to change the program purpose or content substantially, or to prohibit such a program.

## Contracting

The contract award will not be final until the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board and the bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. No program activity may begin before the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board approves the award and execution of an award letter and/or contractual agreement between the successful bidder and the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board. Reductions in the funding level of any contract resulting from this solicitation process may be considered during the contract period when a bidder fails to meet expenditure, participant, and/or outcome goals specified in the contract or when anticipated funding is not forthcoming from federal or state governments. The MHCWB reserves the right to determine both the number and the funding levels of contracts finally awarded. Such determination will depend upon overall fund availability and other factors arising during the proposal review process.

## Cost and Negotiations

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to negotiate with any and all offers on modifications to proposals. Bids submitted that are over the maximum amount of funds specified for this RFP will be rejected. The proposal warrants that the costs quoted for services in response to the RFP are not in excess of those that would be charged to any other individual for the same services performed by the bidder.

## Modification of Contracts

Any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP may be unilaterally modified by the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board upon written notice to the Youth Program Providers under the following circumstances:

Youth Program Provider fails to meet performance and service expectations set forth in the contract, or  
The federal or state government increases, reduces, or withdraws funds allocated to the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, which impacts services solicited under this RFP, or  
There is a change in federal or state legislation and/or their regulations, local laws, or applicable policies and procedures.

## Assurances and Certifications

By signing the Statement of Compliance and Disclaimer Form in Attachment F, the applicant agrees to the following assurances and certifications:

The authorized representative agrees to comply with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations governing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Local Workforce Development Boards, and any other applicable laws and regulations. The authorized representative certifies that the proposing organization possesses legal authority to offer the attached proposal. A resolution, motion, or similar action has been duly adopted or passed as an official act of the organization's governing body authorizing the submission of this proposal.

In addition, the authorized representative assures, certifies, and understands that: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) recipients are obligated to maintain the following assurance for the period during which WIOA Title I financial assistance is extended. Each request for proposal, proposal, and application for financial assistance under WIOA Title I shall contain the following assurances.

"As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIOA, the recipient assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws:

Section 188 of the WIOA, which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color or national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of age; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs."

The recipient also assures that it will comply with WIOA implementing regulations and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the recipient's operation of the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the recipient makes to carry out the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity. The recipient understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters: This certification is required by the Federal Regulations, implementing Executive Order 12549, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Parts 85}, Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

By signing the Statement of Compliance and Disclaimer Form, the applicant certifies that neither it nor its principals:

Are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency;

Have not within three years preceding this application been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or Local) transaction or contract under a public transaction, violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

- Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in Paragraph (2) of this section; and

- Have not, within a three-year period preceding this application, had one or more public transactions terminated for cause or default.

**Nondiscrimination:** By signing the Statement of Compliance and Disclaimer Form, the applicant certifies that it shall comply with the nondiscrimination provisions outlined in the WIOA of 2014, including Title I, Sec. 188.

**Conflict of Interest:** All applicants will disclose to the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board if there is a:

Manager, employee, or paid consultant of the Respondent is a member or employee of the MHCWB;

Manager or paid consultant of the Respondent is married to a member or employee of the MHCWB;

Member of the MHCWB, or an employee of the MHCWB, owns or has any control in the Respondent's organization;

A spouse of a member of the MHCWB, or employee of the MHCWB, receives compensation from Respondent for lobbying activities;

Respondent has disclosed within the proposal response any interest, fact, or circumstance that does or may present a potential conflict of interest;

Should Respondent fail to abide by the foregoing covenants and affirmations regarding conflict of interest, Respondent shall not be entitled to the recovery of any costs or expenses incurred in relations to any contract with the MHCWB and shall immediately refund the MHCWB any fees or expenses that may have been paid under the contract and shall further be liable for any other costs incurred or damages sustained by the MHCWB relating to that contract.

**Lobbying:** This certification is required by the Federal Regulations, Implementing Section 1352 of the Program Fraud and Civil Remedies Act, Title 31 U.S. Code, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3018), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 93), Department of Education (34 CFR Part 82), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 93).

**Drug-Free Workplace:** This certification is required by the Federal Regulations, Implementing Section 5150-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. 701; for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Part 85, 668 and 682), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

By signing the Statement of Compliance and Disclaimer Form, the applicant certifies that it shall provide a drug-free workplace by:

Publishing a policy statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the consequences of any such action by an employee;

Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the Contractor's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, the availability of counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed on employees for drug abuse violations in the workplace;

(2) Providing each employee with a copy of the Contractor's policy statement;

Notifying the employees in the Contractor's policy statement that, as a condition of employment under this contract, employees shall abide by the terms of the policy statement, and notifying the Contractor in writing within five (5) days after any conviction for a violation by the employee of a criminal drug statute in the workplace;

Notifying the MHHCWB within ten (10) days of Contractor's receipt of a notice of a conviction of an employee; and,

Taking appropriate personnel action against an employee of violating a criminal drug statute or requiring such employee to participate in drug abuse assistance or a rehabilitation program.

These certifications are material representations of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction.

WIOA Sec. 188 29 CFR Part 38 Discrimination Against Participants: If the Secretary determines that any recipient under WIOA Title I has discharged or in any other manner discriminated against a participant or against any individual in connection with the administration of the program involved, or against any individual because such individual has filed any complaint or instituted or caused to be instituted any proceeding under or related to WIOA Title I, or has testified or is about to testify in any such proceeding or investigation under or related to WIOA Title I, or otherwise unlawfully denied to any individual a benefit to which that individual is entitled under the provision of WIOA Title I or the Secretary's regulations, the Secretary shall, within 30 days, take such action or order such corrective measures, as necessary, with respect to the recipient or the aggrieved individual, or both.

#### WIOA Sec.188 (a):

Federal financial assistance. For the purpose of applying the prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of age under the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101et seq.),on the basis of disability under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), on the basis of sex under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681et seq.),or on the basis of race, color or national origin under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), programs and activities funded or otherwise financially assisted in whole or in part under this Act are considered to be programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

Prohibition of discrimination regarding participation, benefits and employment.

No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with, any such program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex (except as otherwise permitted under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972), national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

Prohibition on assistance for facilities for sectarian instruction or religious worship. Participants shall not be employed under WIOA Title I to carry out the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of any facility that is used or to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship (except with respect to the maintenance of a facility that is not primarily or inherently devoted to sectarian instruction or religious worship, in a case in which the organization operating the facility is part of a program or activity providing service to participants).

Prohibition on discrimination on the basis of participant status. No person may discriminate against an individual who is a participant in a program or activity that receives funds under WIOA Title I, with respect to the terms and conditions affecting, or rights provided to, the individual, solely because of the status of the individual as a participant.

Prohibition on discrimination against certain non-citizens. Participation in programs and activities or receiving funds under WIOA Title I shall be available to citizens and nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylum seekers, and parolees, and other immigrants authorized by the Attorney General to work in the United States.

Section 188 (3) WIOA Title I funds may not be spent on the employment or training of participation in sectarian activities. Further, the undersigned applicant certifies that it shall comply with the provisions outlined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR 80 and 84).

With regard to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), the provider agrees to comply with the implementing regulations that require that each program of training services, when funded in all or in part with federal funds, shall be accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities. The provider further agrees to meet all applicable requirements regarding facility access.

By signing, the applicant certifies that it will comply with all other regulations implementing the laws cited above. This assurance applies to the applicant's operation of the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the applicant makes to carry out the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity.

#### Documentation of Financial Stability:

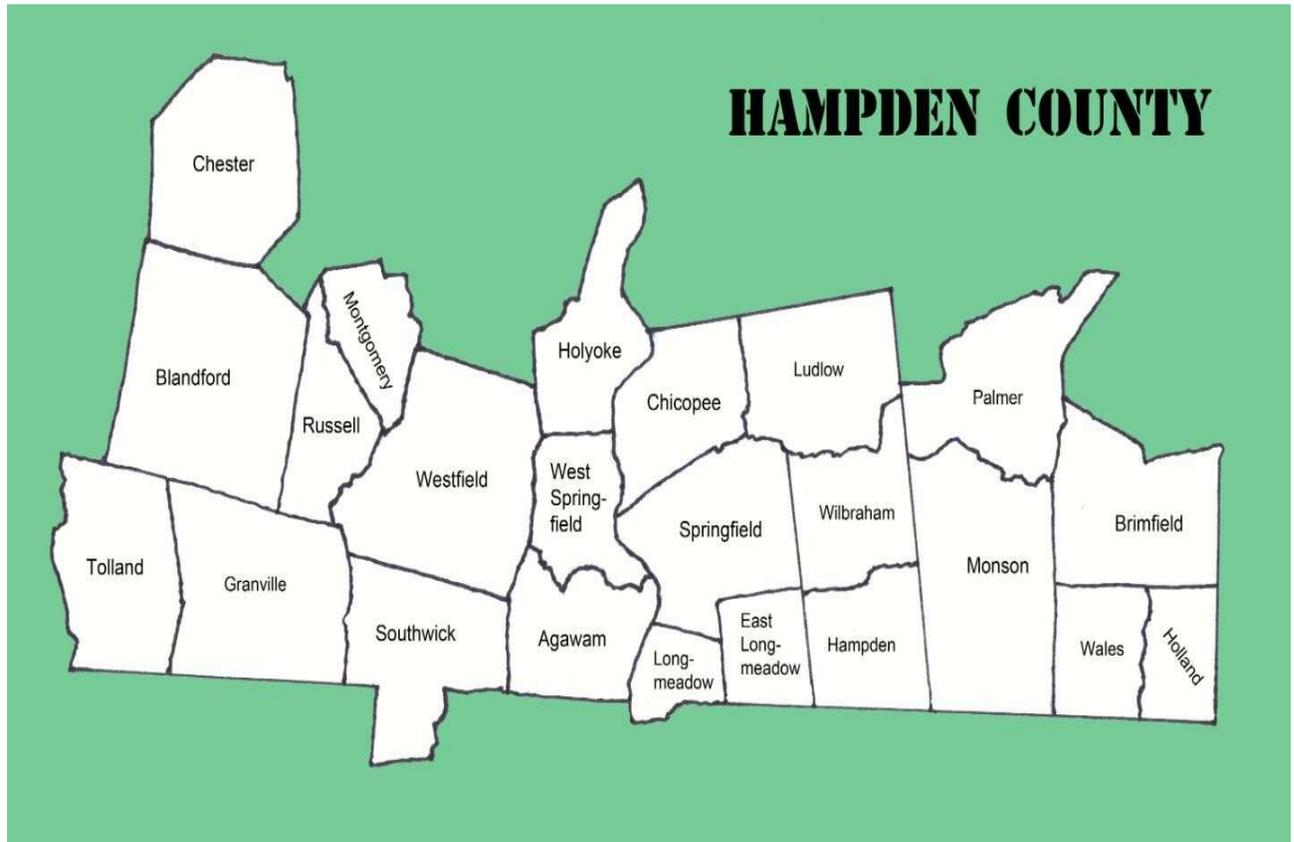
Signing the Statement of Compliance and Disclaimer Form certifies that the applicant shall comply with the provisions of Sec. 122 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

Where the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective recipient shall attach an explanation to this certification.

Signing the Statement of Compliance and Disclaimer Form certifies that the statements above pertaining to Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Nondiscrimination; Conflict of Interest; Education Standards and Procedures; Documentation of Financial Stability and Reporting Requirements are true and correct as of the date of submission. This does not preclude the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board from requiring additional assurances as part of the local application requirements.

Further, the Authorized Representative acknowledges that if the information given to the MHCWB by the applicant causes harm to a third party, then the applicant will be held liable for any MHCWB action resulting from reliance on that information.

# Hampden County Workforce Area



## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A-Letter of Intent
- Attachment B-Cover Page
- Attachment C- Proposal Checklist
- Attachment D1 or D-2 Proposal Summary Forms
- Attachment E- Partnership Form
- Attachment F-Fiscal Questionnaire
- Attachment G- Certificate of Lobbying Activities
- Attachment H: Certificate Regarding Debarment, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion
- Attachment I- Board Membership
- Attachment J- Program Narrative

**Attachment A: Letter of Intent to Bid on Hampden County WIOA Youth Provider Request for Proposals**

Submit this letter to the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board by 5:00pm EST on March 20, 2026, to [RFP@masshirehcb.com](mailto:RFP@masshirehcb.com). **Submission of a letter of intent is mandatory for a proposal to be considered.**

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitting for (Please Check):

In School                       Out of School                       BOTH (Separate proposals required)

Name of Lead Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Collaborating Organizations (if any):

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attachment B: Cover Page**

Legal Name of Applicant Agency			
Number of Years in Business			
FEIN Number			
DUNS Number			
Type of Organization (check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Institution of higher education <input type="checkbox"/> Non-traditional public school <input type="checkbox"/> Consortium of public agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Community organization <input type="checkbox"/> Labor organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Private for Profit <input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-Profit <input type="checkbox"/> Government Agency <input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Business association	
Addresses of Service Location – This is the location where the services described in this application will be provided.	Addresses:		
Principal of Agency – CEO/Executive Director/President	Name		
	Title		
	Address		
	Email Address		
	Phone		
Programmatic Contact Person	Name		
	Title		
	Address		
	Email Address		
	Phone		
Fiscal Contact Person	Name		
	Title		
	Email Address		
	Phone		
Total Amount Requested	\$		
Total Youth To Be Served			

**Attachment C: PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**

Emailed/Electronic Submission instructions noted below to be sent to [rfp@masshirehchw.com](mailto:rfp@masshirehchw.com) by 12:00 NOON April 15, 2026.

Proposal package includes (minimum threshold requirements for acceptance):

**One (1) combined PDF document containing:**

- Signed/E-Signed Application Cover Sheet (Attachment B)
- Proposal Summary Sheet (Attachment D1 or D2)
- Response to Proposal Narrative Questions (Attachment J)
- FY 27 WIOA Cost Worksheet (All Tabs)
- WIOA Youth Budget FY27 Template (All Tabs)

**One (1) combined PDF document containing:**

- Job Descriptions
- Organizational Chart
- Signed/ E-Signed Proposal Checklist (Attachment C)
- Certification Regarding Debarment( Attachment H)
- Anti-Lobbying Certification (Attachment G)
- Board Diversity Information (Attachment I)
- Fiscal Questionnaire (Attachment F)
- Letter of Commitment from Financial Subcontractor(s), if applicable (Attachment E)
- Letter documenting Federally-Approved Indirect Cost rate, if applicable

**One (1) PDF document containing:**

- Most Recent Audited Financial Statements or Single Audit if received > \$750k in Federal Awards

**One (1) Electronic excel copy of WIOA Youth Budget FY 27 Template**

**One (1) Electronic excel copy of FY 27 WIOA Cost Worksheets.**

**In addition, the proposal package:**

- Adheres to the 25 page limit for the proposal narrative
- Includes no other appendices or exhibits except those specifically requested in this RFP

**I certify that the above requirements are met.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW — FOR USE BY MHHCWB STAFF
This proposal _____ meets
_____ does not meet minimum threshold requirements.
Staff comments:
Authorized Staff Signature _____
Date _____

**Attachment D1: In-School Proposal Summary Sheet**

RFP TITLE: WIOA IN SCHOOL Youth -- Hampden County

Fiscal Year 2027

**▪ PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET ▪**

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION OF TRAINING: \_\_\_\_\_

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

<u>EDUCATION CLASSES</u>	<u>HOURS/WEEK</u>	<u>WORK EXP. &amp; OTHER SRVCS.</u>	<u>HOURS/WEEK</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

OTHER SERVICES ACTIVITIES

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

TOTAL CLASS HOURS PER WEEK PER PARTICIPANT: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL WEEKS OF PROGRAMMING: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHEDULE:** (Please provide both Summer Schedule and Year-Round Schedule Below – if different)

**Full Year Schedule:**

START DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ END DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYS (Circle): M T W Th F TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

**Summer Schedule:** (If different from above)

START DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ END DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYS (Circle): M T W Th F TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

<b><u>PROPOSED ENROLLMENTS and COMPLETIONS</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u></b>
TOTAL PROJECTED ENROLLMENTS: TOTAL PROJECTED COMPLETERS BY <b>6/30/27</b> :	_____	<u>100%</u>
<b><u>PROPOSED OUTCOMES</u></b> (Graduates may count in more than one category)		<b><u>PERCENT OF TOTAL COMPLETERS</u></b>
A) Entered Employment/Edu/Training	_____	_____
B) Employment/Edu/Training/Retention	_____	_____
C) Credential Rate	_____	_____
D) OTHER (None of the above)	_____	_____

**Attachment D2: Out-of-School Proposal Summary Sheet**

RFP TITLE: WIOA OUT OF SCHOOL Youth -- Hampden County

Fiscal Year 2027

**▪ PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET ▪**

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION OF TRAINING: \_\_\_\_\_

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<u>EDUCATION CLASSES</u>	<u>HOURS/WEEK</u>	<u>WORK EXP. &amp; OTHER SRVCS.</u>	<u>HOURS/WEEK</u>
--------------------------	-------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

OTHER SERVICES ACTIVITIES

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

TOTAL CLASS HOURS PER WEEK PER PARTICIPANT: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL WEEKS OF PROGRAMMING: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHEDULE:** (Please provide both Summer Schedule and Year-Round Schedule Below - if different)

**Full Year Schedule:**

START DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ END DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYS (Circle): M T W Th F TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

**Summer Schedule:** (If different from above)

START DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ END DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYS (Circle): M T W Th F TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

<b><u>PROPOSED ENROLLMENTS and COMPLETIONS</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u></b>
TOTAL PROJECTED ENROLLMENTS: TOTAL PROJECTED COMPLETERS BY <b>6/30/27</b> :	_____	<b><u>100%</u></b>
<b><u>PROPOSED OUTCOMES</u></b> (Graduates may count in more than one category)		<b><u>PERCENT OF TOTAL COMPLETERS</u></b>
E) Entered Employment/Edu/Training	_____	_____
F) Employment/Edu/Training/Retention	_____	_____
G) Credential Rate	_____	_____
H) OTHER (None of the above)	_____	_____



**Attachment F: Fiscal Questionnaire**

Is the agency a not-for-profit entity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the agency subject to the A-133 Single Audit requirement	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the agency do its own accounting? If no, indicate the name and address of the accounting firm below.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Name:		
Address:		
Contact Person:		
Phone Number:		
Does the agency have a current financial procedures manual?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, how often is it reviewed and updated?		
Does the agency have a written cost allocation plan? If yes, please submit	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the agency have an approved Indirect Cost Rate by a cognizant agency? If yes, please submit	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the agency have a conflict of interest policy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
How often is a trial balance prepared?		
Accounting System Disbursements/Reconciliation		
Are all disbursements made by check?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are all checks pre-numbered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Who is authorized to sign checks? Please indicate name and title(s).		
How often is the bank reconciliation prepared?		
Please provide the name and length of engagement.		
Name:		
Length of Engagement:		

**Attachment G: Certificate of Lobbying Activities**

**Certification Regarding Lobbying**

**Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans and Cooperative Agreements**

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract; the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying", in accordance with its instructions.
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub-grants and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub-recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

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Contractor

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Name of Certifying Official

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Signature

---

Date

**Attachment H: Certificate Regarding Debarment, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion**

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**Certification Regarding**  
**Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion**  
**Lower Tier Covered Transactions**

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This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 34 CFR Part 85, Section 85.510, Participants' responsibilities. The regulations were published as Part VII of the May 26, 1988 Federal Register (pages 19160-19211). Copies of the regulations may be obtained by the contacting the person to which this proposal is submitted.

(1) The prospective lower tier participants certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

(2) Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

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Name and Title of Authorized Representative

---

Signature

---

Date



## ATTACHMENT J

### PROGRAM NARRATIVE

#### Organizational Structure/Capacity, and Background (20 points)

1. Briefly describe your organization and its experience with the provision of education and/or training services to the eligible youth population.
2. Indicate the particular youth service backgrounds and qualifications of staff that your agency will assign to provide the services under this RFP.
3. Describe how your agency's staff development policies and activities will ensure that the staff
4. Working on this project have the necessary qualifications to meet youth enrollee needs.
5. MHCWB strives to support organizations that place a high value on employee retention; please
6. Provide your organization's turnover rates, salary bands, and a summary of benefits.
7. Explain how your mission and other programs align with this funding opportunity.
8. Describe program strategies or approaches that demonstrate innovative, flexible, or creative in-service delivery.
9. Describe your experience in working with special populations (i.e., individuals with disabilities, individuals with basic skills deficiency, limited English speakers, highly educated immigrants, veterans, individuals with criminal backgrounds, and recipients of public assistance).
10. Describe your experience working with youth with barriers to employment and other community partners to ensure access to and provide services promptly.
11. Describe your organization's experience in delivering trauma-informed practices to youth in the workforce setting.

#### Service Strategy (40 points)

##### Program Structure

1. Identify the number and targeted population of youth for your program. Provide specific background information to demonstrate that there are sufficient numbers in this target population to achieve your program's proposed enrollment goal.
2. For In-School programs, please indicate what grade(s) the program will be focused on. Include hours of program activities and staffing structure.
3. For Out-of-School programs, identify the staffing structure and the weekly schedule for the project.
4. Will the proposed services be in a new program or will they be integrated into an existing program that your agency is already operating?
5. Identify the specific locations where each component will be provided, including accessibility by public transportation. Describe the program space(s). Indicate whether summer activities will be different from year-round activities and if so, how.

#### Recruitment and Outreach (Marketing)

1. Describe your recruitment and outreach plan to recruit the eligible youth population, including what transportation assistance will be provided for specialized services outside of the Hampden County area, if necessary, the organizations and audiences with which you will communicate,

and the tools and methods you will use. Describe potential challenges that may arise in engaging and enrolling the youth population.

2. Indicate how your project will incorporate any of the Hampden County priority areas initiatives outlined at the beginning of the RFP.

### Comprehensive Assessment

1. Explain your approach to providing customer-centered services, including your organization's trauma-informed practices.
2. Describe how participant strengths and needs will be assessed, including formal and informal assessments.
3. Describe how your assessment process provides an objective assessment of each youth participant and includes a review of academic and occupational skills levels, service needs, and strengths to build individual service strategies for each youth.
4. Describe the target population's barriers to accessing employment and education services. How will the proposed program address those barriers? Describe how supportive service needs will be identified and administered throughout the program duration.

### Career Planning and Case Management

1. Describe the process for developing and managing an individual service strategy plan, including goal progress tracking and how modifications will be made when necessary. The individual service strategy plan should include short-term and long-term employment, educational, and personal goals.
2. Discuss your methods of instruction for job readiness and soft skills development. Discuss how you will develop goals and measure individual achievements in each area.
3. Describe your approach to developing work experience opportunities that would align with the
4. Youth participants' career goals and aspirations are outlined in the individual service strategy plan.
5. How will the program educate participants about a range of occupations and career pathways in a target industry and the required experience, education, and training necessary for such occupations?

### Data Management

1. Describe how your organization securely manages participant information, including participant documents and electronic files.
2. Identify the staff involved in the management of participant data.
3. What is the organization's capacity to submit participant information, participant basic information, enrollment, career plans, case notes, activities, services rendered, and outcomes achieved? Describe your organization's quality assurance process to ensure the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of data submission.

### Employer and Sector-Based Partnerships

1. Describe your employer engagement strategies, including current relationships with businesses, and how they will be leveraged to create work experience opportunities for youth.
2. Describe how your employer engagement strategies will align with businesses' workforce needs and priorities in the Hampden County region.

### Career Pathways:

1. Describe your proposed career pathway(s) in Hampden County region.
2. Identify the occupation(s) at the center of the proposed career pathway. Include contextualized education or occupational training, including partnerships, tools, or resources will be utilized in Hampden County.
3. Describe the labor market information that supports the selected career pathway(s)
4. Describe sector-based partnerships that include a wide range of stakeholders, including but not limited to employers, education partners, and community-based organizations.

### Required WIOA Program Elements:

In order to provide youth with access to a broad range of services, or the required 14 WIOA Youth elements, WIOA necessitates forming a robust system of services and providers. Please describe how the program will provide, either in-house, through collaboration, or through referral mechanisms, access to each of the 14 WIOA service elements, including how the program will support participants in achieving skills gain.

Please answer the following questions regarding your organization's approach in delivering the required WIOA program elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention: Describe how participants will be supported to complete academic and occupational credentials.
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services: Describe academic services that will be made available to youth who have not attained a High School diploma or equivalent.
3. Paid and unpaid work experience: Describe what paid and unpaid work experiences will be offered through the program. Proposed work experiences should consider the range of skills and interests of the participants.
4. Occupational skills training: Identify the main Industry Recognized Credential(s) and the corresponding occupational skills training, including any occupational skills training partners.
5. Education concurrently w/workforce preparation: Describe any integrated education programming that occurs concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation.
6. Leadership development: Describe leadership opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors.
7. Supportive Services: Describe how your organization will identify participant support services needs, submit requests, and ensure proper expenditure of funds.
8. Adult Mentoring (12-month min): Describe your approach to mentor recruitment, especially in Hampden County Priority Areas.
9. Follow-Up Services (12 Months): How will you maintain follow-up contact and assist the youth who leave your program, both the youth who drop out of the program as well as the successful program graduates?
10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: Describe how youth participants will be connected to specialized individual counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse and mental health counseling.
11. Financial Literacy Education: Describe the financial literacy services provided to participants, including but not limited to budgeting, setting financial goals, savings, credit, and overcoming debt.
12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training: Describe the entrepreneurial program services available related

to the basics of starting a small business. Services may include, but are not limited to, the entrepreneurial mindset, critical problem solving, business plan development, project management, and marketing.

13. Labor market Services: Explain how Hampden County and Massachusetts labor market data will be utilized in the development of career plans. Explain your approach to working with industry sectors, including Hampden County Priority areas and STEM-related fields.
14. Post-secondary preparation and transition activities: Describe the transition support that will be provided to the participants upon training or school graduation. Describe the post-secondary preparation activities that will be provided.

#### Past Performance & Outcomes (20 points)

WIOA has specific outcomes designated for its Youth programs, primarily placement into employment or post-secondary education or training, enhanced by educational attainments. These have been outlined on the preceding pages of this RFP.

For organizations that have previously received WIOA Youth funds:

Referring to these performance measures, describe your agency's previous performance, over the past two years, with the target youth group.

- Share what changes or improvements your organization would implement if selected to receive WIOA youth funds again.

For organizations that have NOT previously received WIOA Youth funds:

Describe your agency's performance managing similar youth programming as closely as possible to these measures: education, employment, and work readiness preparation. Include supporting data that demonstrates your organization's success and ability to deliver results.

For all applicants:

1. Describe your organization's previous experience administering federal, state, and private
2. grants.
3. Explain your organization's approach to meeting deadlines and addressing any past compliance
4. Challenges, if applicable
5. Detail the steps your organization has taken to enhance program efficiency, ensure compliance, and support continuous improvement

#### Financial Structure and Fiscal Plan (20 points)

1. Describe the administrative and financial management capabilities of the organization. What are the qualifications of the organization's key program management and financial staff, and to what extent will they be involved with this project?
2. Provide the organization's total annual budget amount and list the top five funding sources for the current fiscal year, including funder, amount, and project funded. Estimate what percentage of your overall organization's work would be represented by this contract?
3. If you are proposing a subcontracting model, do you have experience in managing subcontracts for services, including monitoring of subcontractors? How do you ensure proper fiscal oversight and accountability of subcontractors?

4. Describe your experience with cost reimbursement contracts. Describe how you will financially support the costs of doing business until an invoice can be submitted and paid. How will you provide and fund the start-up costs of the program? (Start-up costs are allowable with WIOA funds, although additional funds may be provided by the bidder.)
5. Describe the agency's payroll system and accounting software, including internal controls for accuracy and validity. What is the method for documenting employee time and expenses?
6. If the entity is for-profit, identify the profit percentage built into the proposed budget, and describe the risk and other factors taken into consideration to arrive at this percentage.
7. Profits earned will be subject to negotiations as detailed under Section 3.D.
8. Leveraged funds are not required. However, we are interested in whether the bidder has ideas for securing additional funds to support WIOA Youth services or has additional funds internally that can be utilized for these services. If so, please describe it here. These funds can include cash contributions, staff effort, space, fee-for-service, or other revenue generation, and in-kind contributions. In answering, list each source of leveraged resources, the dollar value, and the function of each leveraged resource, and whether the funds are secured, pending, anticipated, or ideas.
9. Describe the respondent's resource development experience and capacity to access various sources of funding to operate high-quality programs.