



**HAMPDEN COUNTY
WORKFORCE BOARD**

Hampden County Workforce Area

Executive Summary of the Fiscal Year 2026 Workforce Development Operational Plan

HAMPDEN COUNTY WORKFORCE AREA

Executive Summary: Fiscal Year 2026

Workforce Development Operational Plan

I. INTRODUCTION

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHHCWB), in partnership with the Chief Elected Official (CEO), Domenic J. Sarno, Mayor of the City of Springfield, is responsible for developing the Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Plan and submitting it to the MassHire Department of Career Services.

The Annual Plan serves as both a strategic and operational framework to guide workforce development activities in Hampden County. Through this planning process, Local Workforce Development Boards must ensure that effective service delivery, accountability, and positive outcomes remain the guiding principles for all local providers. The MHHCWB is committed to fostering strong partnerships, promoting equitable access to services, and supporting innovative strategies that strengthen the region's workforce and economy.

II. Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Allocations

For FY'26, Massachusetts experienced an overall decrease in federal WIOA funding of 12.4% or \$564,986. The impact of this decrease is reflected at the local level. The chart below provides a three-year comparison of WIOA allocations for Hampden County, highlighting year-to-year funding trends and the implications for program planning and service delivery

	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	Diff FY'26 Less FY'25	Diff FY'26 Less FY'24
Adult	1,927,525	1,710,220	1,548,378	(161,842)	(379,147)
Dislocated Worker	995,443	898,482	748,444	(150,038)	(246,999)
Youth	2,240,334	1,924,988	1,672,882	(252,106)	(567,452)
Total	5,163,302	4,533,690	3,969,704	(563,986)	(1,193,598)

III. WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

Through the MassHire Springfield and MassHire Holyoke Career Centers, Adult and Dislocated Worker job seekers have access to a wide range of services supported by a comprehensive mix of employment programs. Under WIOA, all job seekers are eligible for basic career services, while additional individualized career, training, and follow-up services are available to those who meet specific eligibility criteria. Examples of these services include:

- Career Center Seminar (CCS)
- Job Search/Job Readiness Workshops
- Individual Career Counseling and Career Planning
- Comprehensive Assessments
- Labor Market Information
- Occupational Skills Training
- Job Development and Placement Assistance

HAMPDEN COUNTY WORKFORCE AREA

Executive Summary: Fiscal Year 2026

Workforce Development Operational Plan

Adults:

In FY'26, approximately 264 adult job seekers will receive additional intensive and/or occupational skills training services that are available to persons predicated on meeting certain eligibility criteria.

Dislocated Workers:

In FY'26, approximately 225 dislocated worker job seekers will receive additional individualized and/or training services available to persons predicated on meeting certain eligibility criteria.

In addition, other WIOA and non-WIOA funding sources assisting dislocated workers may include:

- Registered Apprenticeships
- On-the-Job Training
- MassHire Department of Career Center Services "Rapid Response"
- Workforce Competitive Trust Fund Grant – Healthcare Related Trainings
- Mass Tech Collaborative Funding – Advanced Manufacturing
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IV. Wagner – Peyser

Wagner-Peyser funded employment services provide universal access to basic career services delivered through the region's two Career Centers – MassHire Springfield and MassHire Holyoke Career Centers. The Career Centers will focus on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers. In FY'26, the region received \$699,690 for Wager-Peyser services. Compared to FY'25, this a -3.1% decrease in funding of -\$22,700.

During FY'26, approximately 20,000 jobseekers will receive labor exchange services. Of those receiving services, approximately 18,000 will be unemployed.

V. Business Services

The Career Center's MassHire Business Solutions will assist employers in recruiting and hiring qualified and talented job seekers. During FY'26, approximately 1,500 employers will be provided services through the Career Center. Services will consist of job postings, applicant screening and referrals; Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC); on site recruitments; job fairs; labor market information; Business Workshops.

HAMPDEN COUNTY WORKFORCE AREA

Executive Summary: Fiscal Year 2026

Workforce Development Operational Plan

VI. WIOA Youth Programs

The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board provides funds to organizations in Hampden County to support and maintain a framework of education, training, and employment services for youth 14-24 years of age. Our goal is to re-connect these youth with education and employment strategies, which will lead to a life-long attachment with the workforce and ultimately economic self-sufficiency.

In FY'26, the MHHCB funded four in-school youth programs for \$353,249 and three out-of-school programs totaling \$1,063,722. Through those programs, Hampden County will serve approximately 369 youth: 149 in-school youth and 220 out-of-school youth.

Additional Youth Programs

The Connecting Activities (CA) program, funded through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, will provide services career and work-based learning immersion experiences for students at our partner schools: Agawam High, Chicopee Comprehensive High, Chicopee High, Holyoke High, Longmeadow High, Ludlow High, Minnechaug Regional, Monson High, Palmer High, Pathfinder Regional Vocational Academy, Gateway Regional High, West Springfield High, East Longmeadow High, and Westfield High.

In addition, the following Springfield Public Schools are partners: Central High, John J. Duggan Academy, High School of Commerce, Putnam Vocational Technical Academy, Springfield Conservatory of the Arts, Springfield High School of Science & Technology, Springfield High, Springfield Renaissance School, and Springfield Virtual School.

The FY'26 YouthWorks summer program will provide work-based learning experiences to approximately 653 low-income youth in Hampden County between the ages of 14 and 25. In addition, the FY'26 YouthWorks year-round program will serve another 300 low-income youth. Combined, the summer and year-round programs will engage approximately 953 youth in meaningful work-based learning experiences.

HAMPDEN COUNTY WORKFORCE AREA
Executive Summary: Fiscal Year 2026
Workforce Development Operational Plan