

FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUSINESS PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The submission of the FY08 Business Plan is a yearly requirement of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development (DWD). DWD is designated by the Governor to oversee Federal Workforce Investment Act and Wagner Peysen funds as well as state funds such as WIB Workforce Development, Connecting Activities through the Department of Education and One Stop funds.

The Business Plan is utilized by the WIB and Career Center of Lowell throughout the year as a tool to compare goals and objectives as well as institute best practices for improved services to our customers. The plan includes a discussion of the Greater Lowell Labor Market, an outline of program services and priorities as well as Assurances of compliance with state and federal policies. The GLWIB Performance Goals and the Integrated Budget for FY08 are also included.

This plan was created through the joint efforts of GLWIB and Career Center of Lowell staff and has been reviewed by the GLWIB Workforce Issues Committee.

- **Plan Narrative Part I. Instructions on Plan development and submission**
- **Plan Narrative Part II. The Greater Lowell Labor Market**

This section discusses labor market characteristics, trends, wages, local employers, skill assessment and unemployment statistics for the Greater Lowell labor market. Comparisons to the state as a whole are indicated.

Noteworthy Information

- Small employers dominate the Greater Lowell workforce area. Among the 6,695 employers reporting in March 2006, over 85% of these had fewer than 20 employees yet made up only 22% of the labor force. By contrast, 182 employers reported having at least 100 employees and account for almost 50% of all jobs in the workforce area.
- The Massachusetts labor force increased by 0.9% from 2005 to 2006, however Greater Lowell's decreased by 0.1%.
- Manufacturing still plays a significant role in our area economy accounting for 17.2% of all jobs in Greater Lowell compared to the state average of just fewer than 10%.
- Health Care/Social Assistance and Professional/Business Services are the two major sources of industry .
- Education attainment and Training plays an increasingly prominent role for current and future job seekers. More than half of all new jobs related to growth will require an Associates' Degree or higher.

GLWIB Initiatives

- *Healthcare Learning Network* is a partnership of four workforce areas working regionally and cooperatively to address skill shortages in the healthcare industry in our regions by creating a virtual classroom providing training that reflects the practices and knowledge specific to the healthcare industry.
- *Leadership Initiatives for Teaching and Technology (LIFT)* is an initiative that provides funding for teacher externships in high growth industries to foster connections between education and workforce development.
- *Connecting Activities* is a program funded by Department of Education focusing on in school youth struggling with MCAS testing. Youth utilize the Work-Based Learning Plan and are matched up with private sector internship opportunities.

Plan Narrative Section III

This section of the Business Plan discusses services provided to our Career Center customers including WIA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Veterans and Youth job seekers. It also presents our plans for services to be provided to our business customers.

- The Career Center Seminar will continue to be a key tool in providing job seekers with their service options.
- Staff training and coordination with our workforce development partners will continue.
- The continued demand for services from dislocated workers will result in a transfer of funds from Title I Adult (25%) to Title I Dislocated Worker.
- Career Center staff will continue to work with customers to explore the latest labor market information and results from Individual Training Account vendor programs.
- Core services to youth will be expanded in the Career Center to compliment the continued investment of Title I Youth funds in year round programs through the GLWIB RFP process. Approximately \$450,000 will be contracted.
- Business Services will continue to be expanded to more local employers.
- Efforts to reduce duplication through coordination of business services and job development among our partners will increase.
- The Career Center will continue to utilize customer feedback to improve and enhance services.
- The Career Center will enhance its coordination with the state Rapid Response Team to address the needs of our customers impacted by small and large layoffs in our area.
- The GLWIB and Career Center will continue their strong partnership relationships with a wide network of workforce investment local and state partners.

Goals for FY08

- Over 8,700 job seekers will be served
- 500 persons with disabilities
- 400 veterans
- 80 Title I Economically Disadvantaged Adults
- 325 Title I Dislocated Workers
- 140 Economically Disadvantaged Title I Youth
- 480 Employers will receive services

Federal performance standards goals:

79% Entered Employment Rate for Title I Adults
83% Entered Employment Rate for Title I Dislocated Workers
63% Entered Employment Rate for Title I Older Youth
78% Entered Employment Rate for Title I Younger Youth

Budget for FY08

- Total of \$5.3 million in workforce development funds.
This is an increase of \$800,000 from FY07.
- Wagner Peyser reduced from FY07 by \$13, 702.
- WIA allocations were higher for the state by 20%,
however only 9% for Greater Lowell WIA.0