

Third Sector & MassHire Learning Community Updated Workshop Series Description November 18, 2019

OVERVIEW

With feedback from the MassHire Workforce Boards and Career Centers, Third Sector has revised the proposed MassHire Learning Community technical assistance. In response to requests for more information and examples to shape a potential project, the Learning Community content has been adjusted to focus on the incremental steps for embedding outcomes-orientation into partnerships, which could inform future project identification. In response to expressed capacity constraints, the Learning Community time required will be confined to a three-part workshop series with the option to delve deeper through homework and one-on-one support.

The workshop series will be comprised of three interactive, in-person workshops. Participants will leave the workshops with a strong understanding of approaches for using outcomes orientation to guide program evaluation, continuous improvement, and stakeholder engagement. As a result of the workshops, MassHire Workforce Partners will identify initial actions they can take to incorporate outcomes metrics, data-driven feedback loops, and continuous improvement processes into their local workforce development efforts and improve results. These actions will lay the groundwork for future outcomes-oriented advancements, such as embedding financial and nonfinancial incentives and/or transitioning procurements and contracts to incorporate pay-for-performance elements.

Third Sector will use the workshop series to identify ways in which the Department of Career Services, in partnership with the Massachusetts Workforce Association, could support further outcomes-orientation efforts by local MassHire Workforce Partners in capacity-constrained environments. Following the series, Third Sector will share insights gained from the workshops with state-level partners through a written report and in-person meetings.

WORKSHOP SERIES

Third Sector will lead a series of three, two-hour long workshops designed to build a greater understanding of outcomes-orientation strategies and identify concrete next steps for implementing components of outcomes-orientation. The workshops will be comprised of case study examples from other jurisdictions, hands-on small group activities, and facilitated discussions. During the workshops, Third Sector will use tools that will help participants apply broader concepts to their specific contexts.

Building from the content delivered during in-person workshops, optional homework exercises will be provided to help further customize concepts to site-specific context and goals. Sites will also have the opportunity to schedule one-on-one sessions with Third Sector in between workshops for additional guidance, if desired.

Workshop 1: Metrics, Data Sharing, & Evaluation

Goals: At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to answer the following questions:

- How do I define program progress and success to better meet the needs and goals of my clients?
- What metrics do I currently use or could I start using to track progress and success in order to demonstrate my program's impact?
- What existing or new data sources could be leveraged to align discussions with partners around a set of common goals?
- How can I use the data I currently have to identify outcomes disparities and set priorities to reach underserved populations?

Activities: Participants will identify and map relevant metrics, review accessible data sources, and identify potential data sharing pathways to measure program impact.

Tools: Outcomes Matrix and Logic Model

State Takeaways: State partners will understand MassHire Workforce Partners' metrics of interest, the necessity and availability of data sources, and avenues for state engagement in data sharing pathways.

Workshop 2: Continuous Improvement & Stakeholder Engagement

Goals: At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to answer the following questions:

- Which stakeholders (such as providers and employers) can provide context and qualitative data and should be involved in analyzing and interpreting quantitative data?
- How can I incorporate data into existing meetings and operational processes in order to align stakeholders around common goals and support the achievement of my priority outcomes?
- What are examples of continuous improvement structures used by other systems to improve outreach, support programs, and drive positive long-term outcomes?
- How might I incorporate data-driven continuous improvement in my context to ensure that programs are consistently meeting the needs of my clients and achieving desired outcomes?

Activities: Participants will identify mechanisms to facilitate engagement with key stakeholders, develop a data sharing and review plan, and determine strategies for continuous improvement.

Tools: Continuous Improvement Plan and Stakeholder Map

State Takeaways: State partners will understand how to support local and regional continuous improvement processes and incorporate relevant workforce metrics into state-level stakeholder conversations.

Workshop 3: Building Towards Outcomes-Based Contracts

Goals: At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to answer the following questions:

- How could the activities from the previous two workshops be used to create an infrastructure and an enabling environment for outcomes-based contracts in my local context?
- What are examples from other jurisdictions of financial and nonfinancial incentives that solidify and support partners' management towards outcomes?
- How might I continue to work towards transitioning a program area or funding stream to outcomes-based contracts in order to meet the goals I've identified during the workshop series?

Activities: Participants will develop prioritized short and long-term implementation next steps and a shortlist of potential contracts to transition.

Tools: Prioritized Next Steps List

State Takeaways: State partners will understand the immediate and long-term goals of MassHire Workforce Partners for outcomes orientation, the state-level actions needed to move outcomes-based contracts forward, and the best ways to provide support to local partners.

POST-WORKSHOP ENGAGEMENT

Following the workshop series, Third Sector will provide actionable recommendations for immediate next steps for MassHire Workforce Partners. Participants who are looking for further individualized guidance can take advantage of an optional one-month period of technical assistance directly following the workshop series. During this period, Third Sector can provide assistance on fleshing out implementation next steps, scoping project ideas, and other areas. Third Sector will also author a report on key takeaways resulting from the workshop series for both state and local partners. The report will contain initial recommendations on how the state can support local MassHire Workforce Partners in transitioning to outcomes-based contracts.

WORKSHOP LOGISTICS

Workshops will be held over a period of three months during January, February, and March. Workshops will be convened in a central location, such as Framingham or Worcester, and will be built off of existing MassHire Partners and/or Massachusetts Workforce Association meetings. No application is necessary, but participants are encouraged to commit to all three workshops in order to gain the full benefits of the series. It is also suggested that each MassHire Workforce Partner attends the series with at least one colleague to make small-group working time more productive.