



Workforce Issuance

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Policy Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
MassHire Workforce Board Chairs
MassHire Workforce Board Directors
MassHire Career Center Directors
MassHire Fiscal Officers
MDCS Operations Managers

cc: WIOA State Partners

From: Alice Sweeney, Director
MassHire Department of Career Services

Date: May 13, 2021

Subject: **Mass Internet Connect (MIC): Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and
Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Training Update**

Purpose: To notify MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators, and other workforce partners of Mass Internet Connect (MIC), and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Training Update that is scheduled for May 21st. The training will include upcoming modifications to the MIC Program.

Background: The Emergency Broadband Benefit is a Federal Communications Commission program to help families and households struggling to afford internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On December 27, 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 became law and established an Emergency Broadband Connectivity Fund of \$3.2 billion in the United States Treasury to help Americans afford internet service during the pandemic. The Act directed the Federal Communications Commission to use the fund to establish an Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB Program), under which eligible low-income households may receive a discount off the cost of broadband service and

certain connected devices, and participating providers can receive a reimbursement for such discounts. The EBB Program will conclude when the fund is expended or six months after the end of the public health emergency.

Announced in January 2021, Mass Internet Connect (MIC) is a Partnership comprised of Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MassTech), MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS), and the MassHire Workforce Development System, working together to connect job seekers with the tools, services, and internet connections necessary to “get people back to work”.

The MIC program is a state-wide initiative that is supported by the Baker-Polito Administration. The goal of partnering with MassTech is to assist Massachusetts’ unemployed job seekers looking for work to gain internet access and become aware of this program through the state’s network of Career Centers.

The MIC program will continue for:

- Customers currently enrolled in the MIC program, including subsidies, devices, and digital literacy training;
- New customers in need of a device;
- New customers in need of digital literacy training;
- New customers that are either not eligible for or not in a community covered by the EBB program, who will then be referred to the Verizon jetpack program.

The new federal EBB Program will cover:

- New customers requiring subsidized internet services that satisfy the EBB eligibility requirements.

The scheduled virtual training date is Friday, May 21st at 10 am.

Action

Requested: Please share this issuance with all management, staff, and SPOCs to ensure that staff attend the training to learn more about the updates that will affect the current MIC program and the implementation timeframe.

Please register for this training in advance through Eventbrite* by clicking on the link below.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/wioa-partner-cross-trainings>

After registering on Eventbrite, please find the WebEx login details in your Eventbrite confirmation.

Effective: Immediately.

Inquiries: Please direct questions to Kim Leonard at kim.m.leonard@detma.org. Please reference this MassHire Department of Career Services Workforce Issuance number in your inquiry.

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