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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

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Category:	Training
Subject:	Microsoft "Elevate America" eLearning and Exam Vouchers
Source:	State
Revise/Replace:	N/A
Contact:	Employment & Training Programs Director
Distribution:	All Managers, Directors, Financial, Program & Administrative Staff
Colorado One-Stop System Policy Guidance Letter: 09-19-P	
Date:	December 16, 2009

I. REFERENCES

Collaborative Online Workforce Education & Training Portal Demonstration Grant – PGL 09-13-P

II. PURPOSE

To provide guidance on the *Microsoft "Elevate America" E-Learning and Exam Voucher* processes, voucher types, program timeline, eligibility, participant, data reporting and monitoring requirements and ensure compliance with state and Microsoft requirements governing this program.

III. BACKGROUND

CDLE will receive *Microsoft "Elevate America"* eLearning and certification exam vouchers at no cost from the Microsoft Corporation. The Microsoft donated vouchers are intended to enhance the technical skills needed for jobs of today and in the future for the citizens of the state of Colorado.

Online learning is an alternative form of training that can be used in place of traditional classroom training when constraints of time, proximity to education facilities and family needs are barriers. Although not everyone is suited to take online Microsoft product courses, learners who are comfortable with technology, computers and the Internet and who are proficient in their basic education skills, are most likely to be successful for this project.

These vouchers will expand the regions' ability to provide training for clients and it is

recommended that currently enrolled participants be looked at first for eligibility in this project due to the time limitations. The vouchers may be configured in different ways with services and funding from other programs; and, paired up with additional courses such as the Online Courses program when appropriate.

IV. POLICY/ACTION

CDLE will NOT be issuing a Notice of Fund Availability (NFA) Letter because the Expenditure Authorization (EA) is non-financial (under \$100,000.00). The EA document will serve as our agreement. Regions will need to include their voucher allotment numbers (see the attached allotment table) and agree to adhere to the Microsoft Voucher Donation Agreement (see attached).

CDLE does not require a Board of County Commissioners to sign off on this document, however, Workforce Center Directors along with LWIB Board chairs will need to sign off on the EA.

Regions will need to designate in the EA a Microsoft "Elevate America" project contact person for CDLE staff to regularly communicate about coordinating training, voucher distribution and track progress during the first 90 days of the program.

The EA template needs to be submitted to CDLE by **December 31, 2009**. In addition to the requirements outlined in Sections IV.A through E below, the EA Scope of Work shall include:

- The number of participants to be served within each quarter
- The total number of participants to be served
- Program goals, objectives and outcomes

In accordance with the Microsoft Agreement, a **90 day time limit to distribute and activate** *All* donated vouchers (E-Learning and Certification Exams) will start on **January 6, 2010**. Any region EA received after that date will have less than 90 days to distribute the vouchers and enroll participants into the program.

These vouchers are unique; while participants have up to one year to take the eLearning courses, the certification exam vouchers have to be used within the first 90 days. CDLE recommends that participants complete the eLearning courses within the first 60 days and complete the certification exam within the last 30 days. CDLE also recommends, due to the time constraints, that participants receive one voucher at a time to help insure that students are successful in completing the courses.

The voucher distribution and activation processes as outlined by Microsoft are as follows:

1. Microsoft will issue to CDLE all vouchers ("in the form of a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet)
2. CDLE will distribute all the voucher numbers via e-mail to the designated regional contacts.
3. The regions will distribute the vouchers to Colorado residents (participants).

4. Participants will need Internet access to activate the web based course(s). (See Technical Requirements section)
5. Participants must **activate** their **E-Learning vouchers within 90 day** of our **Start Date of January 6, 2010**. (Activation will need to be monitored by the region.)
6. The participants have **1 year** from **activation** of the **E-Learning vouchers** to complete the course work.
7. However, participants receiving the certification exam vouchers must **take the certification exam(s) within 90 days** of the **January 6, 2010 Start Date**.

The voucher types as outlined by the Microsoft agreement are as follows:

- a. “Microsoft E-Learning Vouchers are available for use by the end recipient for 12 months from date of activation. Activation must be made within 90 days of CDLE’s receipt of the Vouchers. There are two types of vouchers available to customers.
 - i. Elevate America General E-Learning vouchers will give users a choice of pursuing a “learning collection” within either Windows XP & Office 2003 or Windows Vista and Office 2007. A “learning collection” is a set of learning courses on a specific topic area (i.e. Excel, Word, Outlook, etc.). One Voucher will enable a user to pursue one learning collection.
 - ii. A separate group of E-Learning vouchers is available for customers who are interested in pursuing IT Professional learning courses. These vouchers are intended for customers who are IT Professionals and are interested in acquiring skills above and beyond what is offered through the General E-Learning Voucher and gives the recipient access to an extended library of learning designed specifically for the IT Professional.
- b. Vouchers which are designated for Microsoft Certification Exam(s) must be used within 90 days of state receipt of Voucher.
 - i. Vouchers which are designated for Microsoft Certification Exam(s) enable a user to pursue a no cost exam in one topic area (i.e. Excel, Word, Outlook, etc.). One Voucher will enable a user to pursue one exam in either Office 2003 OR Office 2007. The user must specify at the time of receipt of the Voucher which certification exam they are interested in pursuing.
 - ii. Microsoft Certification Exams are provided by Microsoft certified testing partner locations. These locations may charge a proctoring fee which the user may be required to pay. This fee falls outside of the Elevate America voucher program and is not covered as part of this program. Regions may choose to become certified testing locations and can choose to offer these exams at no cost.”

Regions may be able to use funds from other programs to offer proctoring fees and other supportive services, as needed.

Regions are encouraged to research their existing databases and recruit clients that are ready to receive vouchers on or near the January 6, 2010 start date.

Given the nature of some of the programs, regions may want to consider the following clients for this program:

- Administrative Assistants
- Office Workers
- Participants with IT backgrounds
- Financial Workers
- Clericals

The regions may also want to consider clients that are currently enrolled in WIA training who would benefit from an increased proficiency in Microsoft office product skills. This would allow regions to co-enroll participants and decrease the WIA training costs. This would also allow regions to take credit for participants in both programs.

A. Eligibility Requirements

Participants must be:

- A Colorado resident
- Selective Service (when applicable)
- U.S. Citizens or lawfully present.
- Registered in Connecting Colorado/JobLink.

Regions will document eligibility in accordance with local policies and procedures. Documentation may be either hard copy (paper) or electronic in Connecting Colorado/Joblink, as appropriate. Unless participants are co-enrolled in WIA, they will not be included in the region's WIA Common Measures.

B. Successful Online Learners

Participants should be identified as suitable for online learning. Regions may assess a participant's basic concepts and skills needed to use a computer by having the participant take the Microsoft's Digital Literacy Curriculum found online at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/About/CorporateCitizenship/Citizenship/giving/programs/UP/digitalliteracy/GBR/Curriculum2.msp>

C. Related Expenditures

- Donated vouchers for this program can **only** be used for Colorado residents.
- If participants are co-enrolled in another program, staff time may be charged against that program (e.g., ES, RE, DW, AD, YT).
- If the Microsoft Certification Exams provided at a Microsoft certified testing partner location charges a proctoring fee, it is not covered by Elevate America and must be paid by the region or the participant.

D. Reporting Requirements

1. Program Data Entry and Reporting:

The workforce regions are required to use the following activity / service codes in Joblink for meeting Microsoft's reporting requirements:

DL for Digital Literacy

- The Digital Literacy courses teach and assess basic computer concepts and skills so that people can use computer technology in everyday life. There are two versions available: the **Original Version** which is Microsoft Office 2003 and Microsoft Windows XP and **Version II** which is Microsoft Office 2007 and Microsoft Windows Vista.
 - The Digital Literacy Curriculum consists of five courses:
 - Computer Basics
 - The Internet and the World Wide Web
 - Productivity Programs
 - Computer Security and Privacy
 - Digital Lifestyles
 - There is a free Digital Literacy Certificate Test available.
- There are no vouchers associated with the Digital Literacy courses or certification. However, CDLE would like to track participants who use this free public service provided by Microsoft to assess if participants going through these courses and/or successfully completing the Digital Literacy certification test have a greater success rate with the other Microsoft vouchers provided.

E7 for the Vista and Office 2007 E-Learning vouchers

E3 for the XP and Office 2003 E-Learning vouchers

V7 for the Vista and Office 2007 Certification Exam vouchers

V3 for the XP and Office 2003 Certification Exam vouchers

CDLE will pull the participants marked with these service codes and run the ETA 9002 report to capture and transmit the required data to Microsoft on a quarterly basis.

Although most of the testing and courses will have been completed within 13 months, the EA shall continue through June 30, 2012 to cover other data collection and reporting requirements related to this project.

2. Monitoring:

Monitoring reviews for this program will be conducted as a part of the regular quarterly and annual program monitoring conducted by the State Workforce Liaisons.

V. RECAPTURE OF FUNDS FOR REDISTRIBUTION

CDLE encourages collaboration with other regions and other grants that address training needs. Should a region determine that they cannot fully support the use of the donated vouchers the region needs to contact CDLE prior to the last 30 days of the program so that the remaining vouchers can be redistributed.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Upon receipt of this Program Guidance Letter, the execution of the EA document but not prior to January 6, 2010.

VII. INQUIRIES

Please direct any questions you have regarding this PGL to Laura Hahn at 303-318-8837 or via email at laura.hahn@state.co.us.

Clarke Becker, Director
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