



Category/Subject: Post-Secondary Education and Training Resources for UI Claimants and Other Unemployed Workers
Colorado Policy Guidance Letter#: WP-2017-01
Revise/Replace PGL#: N/A
Date: March 20, 2017
Distribution: CDLE Management/Finance, State/Local Workforce Directors & Staff, Partners

I. REFERENCE(S):

Federal Guidance:

- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 (P.L. 113-128), Title I and Title III
- Section 3304(a)(8) of the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA)
- Section 211€(1) of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-56) (VOW Act)
- Section 470A of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-329)
- Training and Employment Notice (TEN) No. 11-09, Supporting UI Claimant Training Needs in One-Stop Career Centers
- TEN No. 32-08, Guidance on 2009-2010 FAFSA: New Needs Determination to Include WIA Dislocated Workers
- TEGL No. 21-08, Change 1, Pell Grants and the Payment of Unemployment
- TEGL No. 2-09, Approved Training for the Unemployment Insurance Program Recommend Policies
- TEGL No. 8-16, Supporting Unemployment Insurance Beneficiaries Seeking Postsecondary Education or Training
- Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 14-16, Change 1, The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (P.L. 114-92) – Provisions that Affect the Unemployment Compensation for Ex-service members Programs
- GEN-14-22, Apprenticeships and the Federal Student Aid Programs, U.S. Department of Education

State Guidance:

- WP-2016-05: UI Claimant and Workforce Reemployment Services
- WP-2011-02: Regular Approved Training Requests
- WIOA-2015-06, Change 4: Eligible Training Providers for the WIOA Title I Programs
- WIOA-2015-09, Change 2: Individual Training Accounts for the WIOA Title I Programs

II. PURPOSE:

This Policy Guidance Letter (PGL) provides notification to the state workforce system about some promising practices that have been identified and encouraged by CDLE and USDOL.

USDOL is promoting a greater awareness and understanding of educational supports and opportunities for customers who have been laid off. This is supported by Section 305 of WIOA, which identifies UI claimants as one of the targeted populations to serve. In addition, Section 7(a)(3)(G) of the Wagner-Peyser Act acknowledges the importance of referring UI claimants and Veterans to education and training opportunities, along with individual resources to fund the training programs. This includes information and access to financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under WIOA.

III. BACKGROUND:

Since 2009, USDOL encouraged states to increase partnerships with the Community College and Financial Aid systems, as well as Workforce and UI reemployment initiatives. CDLE collaborated by providing information about educational and financial resources through Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), Pell Grants, and other financial aid programs - <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/pell-grant>

Studies have shown that additional education and credentials can help to improve employment conditions for job seekers. CDLE experienced this with the Colorado Enhanced Approved Training Program (CEATP). From 2009 to 2013, Colorado participated in a state-funded program that provided enhanced benefits (up to 20 additional weeks of UI benefits) to eligible claimants in approved training programs. The focus was training for in-demand and emerging fields that were expected to create a large number of jobs in Colorado.

Performance indicators showed a significant increase in the WIA Common Measures for CEATP participants as compared to Wagner-Peyser customers or UI claimant customers who did not participate in CEATP, as shown in the chart below:

Average Performance Rates since Program Inception – July 2009 to December 2013	Wagner-Peyser Customers	Wagner-Peyser – UI Claimant Customers	Enhanced Approved Training Recipients (CEATP)
Entered Employment Rate	53.17%	56.83%	71.67%
Employment Retention Rate	76.92%	82.40%	79.34%
Quarterly Average Earnings	\$14,415	\$16,450	\$17,514

Colorado aims to provide access to meaningful employment for Colorado citizens, resulting in economic vitality throughout the state. By 2020, nearly two-thirds of all jobs (nationally) will require some postsecondary education or training. State and Federal unemployment laws allow UI claimants to continue to receive unemployment benefits while enrolled in approved training programs. Accessing training while receiving unemployment benefits is intended to help to reduce the reliance on loans and increase the completion rate of training programs.

Over the past years, CDLE has been coordinating the partnership and integration of services between the workforce system and UI. Coordination efforts and activities have automated and streamlined the messaging we provide to our shared customers. Examples include: Regular Approved Training; Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA); Links to Reemployment; cross-training; and collaborations on messaging and communications to shared customers.

IV: POLICY/ACTION:

Local areas are expected to examine their training and service delivery policies and procedures and make adjustments to ensure that customers receive appropriate application assistance in the pursuit of educational and financial resources, in particular, for unemployment insurance (UI) beneficiaries and other unemployed workers. This effort may include the following actions:

- Evaluate any additional flexibility that can be given to extend the allowable period of time in training, especially for programs that position individuals for in-demand jobs.
- Provide UI beneficiaries and other unemployed workers with educational financial aid applications, including contact information for local financial aid offices at community colleges, universities and colleges.
- Incorporate Pell Grant and financial aid resources in workforce orientations, such as WIOA, Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), and Veterans Programs, along with discussions with Veterans who have access to the Montgomery GI Bill, or Post 9-11 educational assistance.
- Provide assistance and make connections with financial aid programs. This will allow the customers to establish financial aid assistance and eligibility for training and education programs that are not funded under WIOA or other workforce, veteran and rehabilitation programs.
- Create a desk aid, conduct staff training, or upgrade websites and materials on the available resources for financial aid and other educational resources, including such items as:
 - College In Colorado – a free website to discover career pathways and career planning - www.collegeincolorado.org
 - The Department of Education’s *Financial Aid Toolkit* – provides Federal student aid and outreach tools for counselors, college access professionals, nonprofit mentors, and others - <http://financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk/>
 - Financial Aid Toolkit – flyer with information about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Program
<https://financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/resources/college-scorecard-fafsa-flyer.pdf>
 - The Department of Education and Department of Labor both issued guidance on ways that colleges and universities can use federal student aid funds to support apprenticeship training programs.
 - GEN-14-22 - <https://ifap.ed.gov/dpclatters/GEN1422.html>
 - The Federal Resources Playbook for Registered Apprenticeships - <https://www.doleta.gov/oa/federalresources/playbook.pdf>
 - FAFSA online help page – <https://fafsa.ed.gov/help.htm>
 - The Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense have collaborated to develop a web portal for service members, veterans, their families, and authorized care givers with a single sign-on and access point to clinical and benefits information - <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>
 - The Department of Labor sponsors various online and interactive tools to help students learn more about career options - www.mynextmove.org and www.mynextmove.org/vets

V. IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

Upon receipt of this guidance, local areas are expected to review all current policies and processes that may be impacted by this policy. Information about local area implementation of this PGL will be requested in the PY17 Local Area Plan.

VI. INQUIRIES:

Please direct all inquiries to your Regional Liaison at Workforce Development Programs, or to sue.rusch@state.co.us



Elise Lowe-Vaughn, Director
Workforce Programs, Policy, and Strategic Initiatives

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Financial Aid Toolkit – Brochure: Score Card and FAFSA Flyer