



## WASHINGTON COUNTY WORKFORCE CENTER (WFC)

### *Workshops, Orientations & Program Engagement Overview*

To meet the new challenges customers face in this economy, the Washington County WFC is providing up-to-date tools and information presented at our workshops in order for job seekers to find self-confidence, efficiency, effectiveness and success in the job search experience. The professional trainers are closely connected with employment counselors for program integrity and have the ability to provide meaningful tools for customers from all backgrounds and skill levels.

### **CUSTOMER ORIENTATIONS AND PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT**

#### **Dislocated Worker Program (DW)**

To meet the high demand of customers waiting to be enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program in Washington County, the registration, orientation and enrollment processes have been designed to expedite the enrollment process and program engagement. The process produces customers who are prepared for full program engagement in training and / or job search beginning with the first meeting with their employment counselor. In the past this may have taken up to three appointments with an employment counselor.

The Washington County WFC offers Dislocated Worker Information Sessions with an overview of the Dislocated Worker Program and prerequisite requirements to be enrolled in the program. These information sessions are held every two weeks, twice on the designated day, and are presented to an average of 70 customers per day. In order to be enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program, customers who are interested in attending school or partaking in job search have certain prerequisites before their first appointment with an employment counselor. This information is relayed through an "Enrollment Checklist" at the information session. Customers sign up for the workshops on the day of the information session, without being enrolled.

#### **Dislocated Worker Program Prerequisites:**

If a Dislocated Worker customer is interested in career transition or training, they must complete the Career Exploration workshop along with Education Exploration workshop prior to meeting with an employment counselor. The Career Exploration workshop is two days in length and comprised of extensive interest, personality and work value assessments, designed for the customer who is "not sure" of what their next career step should be. This is extremely useful for customers in career transition, who want to know what industry or occupation would be their best focus, based on the results of the assessments. The Education Exploration workshop is for customers who are looking for a training opportunity through the Dislocated Worker program. This is a one day workshop helping customers research available schools and programs. It addresses issues related to financial availability, program cost, Labor Market Information and employment projections. After completing these classes, customers will submit the "Enrollment Checklist" and information gathered from the Education Exploration class on their training option of interest to the Dislocated Worker program coordinator. Once this information is received, the customer is assigned to meet with an employment counselor. *Customers that are sure of their career path are not required to take Career Exploration, only the Education Exploration workshop is required prior to their employment counselor meeting.*

If a Dislocated Worker customer is interested in immediate job search, they must complete the Boot Camp – Day One, Day Two, and Day Three and develop a resume, cover letter and thank you letter. After completing these workshops, customers will submit the "Enrollment Checklist" and required job search paper tools from the Boot Camp to the Dislocated Worker program coordinator. Once this information is received, the customer is assigned to meet with an employment counselor.

#### **WORKSHOPS:**

**"Boot Camp"** is a six day series intended for customers interested in securing employment. Topics include: Transition, Empowerment, Job Search Preparation, Resume Foundation, Resume Lab, Marketing Tools, Electronic Networking, First Impressions, Networking, Interviewing, Interview Lab, and Workplace Success.



*Stand Alone Workshops* are individual workshops intended for customers interested in a specific stand alone topic area. Topics include: Technology Skills (Globe College), Resume 101, Age as an Advantage, Financial Literacy, Exploring Self-Employment, and Job Talk Networking Group (TBD). *Career Exploration (Part 1 and 2)* uses occupational and personal evaluations to guide customers in the right direction for their next career opportunity. *Education Exploration* is designed for customers pursuing educational opportunities to research schools, programs and avenues of information to lead to the appropriate choice in training.

#### **REGISTRATION:**

All registrations for workshops are managed by a WFC staff member, including offsite and stand alone classes. When a customer registers for the Boot Camp workshop, they register for the whole series (1-6). This is done once at the beginning of the series in order to decrease registration call volume. Customers that have already taken some classes, etc. can be “plugged” into the process as seen fit, and complete classes based on need. The registration process is seen as a tool to efficiently manage customer numbers, provide increased customer accountability and service satisfaction. Customers are never turned away from a workshop; we always accommodate all customers within reasonable parameters. The Boot Camp, Career Exploration and Education Exploration are offered on a twice monthly basis. Customers have a minimum of two weeks to start their training opportunities through the Washington County WFC. This minimizes wait time and keeps the customer motivated during their time of transition.

#### **Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and Diversionary Work Program (DWP)**

Both MFIP and DWP programs offer weekly overview and orientation sessions. The DWP sessions are offered every Monday and Thursday and the MFIP sessions are offered every Tuesday. Upon completion of the session, intake interview and required intake documentation with a financial worker, customers are assigned to work with employment counselors. Once the customer has met with an employment counselor, an employment plan is set in place and the customer will begin to work in the required activities. The workshops are an essential part of the employment plan. The goals for the MFIP and DWP customers are workshop engagement and providing the necessary tools for customer self-sufficiency. The activities are tracked and weekly contact is maintained with customers. All customers are able to attend any workshops, even if not referred by an employment counselor.

#### **Food Support Employment and Training (FSET)**

The FSET customers are encouraged to attend all workshops and the employment plans are developed to incorporate the workshop series as a main activity.

*MFIP, DWP, and FSET customers’ program requirements are solely based on program policy and what is determined by the employment counselor and customer. There are no prerequisites to be enrolled, only the program financial eligibility managed by the financial workers.*

#### **General Public – Universal Customers**

Customers seeking employment services, who are not interested or eligible for any programs provided by the Washington County WFC, may come to any and all workshops based on customer need. They only need to register for the workshops.

#### **Impact**

The new process of swiftly engaging customers in job search training involved the collaboration of all WFC partners including: Hired, EAC, ESR, Vocational Rehabilitation, Veteran’s Services, area Adult ABE and GED programs, Globe College, WFC trainers, Employment Counselors and other local CBO’s. The process provides service to 70-100 customers per month with half enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program and the other half in universal services. MFIP, DWP, and FSET customers are provided more opportunities to engage in work participation activities resulting in Washington County’s participation rate exceeding other Metro counties for 7 out of the last 12 months. Dislocated Workers have a smoother transition into training. All participants have greater access to training and are able to get into the system more quickly.