

# Mass Workforce Issuance

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**Workforce Issuance No. 14-101**

Policy  Information

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**To:** Chief Elected Officials  
Workforce Investment Board Chairs  
Workforce Investment Board Directors  
Title I Administrators  
Career Center Directors  
Title I Fiscal Officers  
DCS Operations Managers

**cc:** WIA State Partners

**From:** Alice Sweeney, Director  
Department of Career Services

**Date:** December 1, 2014

**Subject:** **Promising Practices and Resources for Addressing Long-Term Unemployment**

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**Purpose:** To notify Local Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce investment partners of Training and Employment Notice [\(TEN\) 12-14](#), dated October 17, 2014 sharing affirmative efforts by employers, employer organizations, and workforce agencies to increase economic competitiveness by tapping into the talent pool of long-term unemployed individuals, which includes many qualified, experienced, and skilled workers. And to encourage the workforce system, through resources and information, to assist the long-term unemployed in returning to work by: (a) partnering with employers to implement promising human resources practices; (b) targeting and expanding work-based learning models, such as on-the-job training; (c) offering specialized services, such as financial counseling, behavioral health counseling, and enhanced job search assistance; and (d) boosting job seeker outreach and engagement strategies to better reach the long-term unemployed.

**Background:** Currently 3.0 million individuals in the U.S. labor market fall into the category of long-term unemployment, defined as jobless for 27 weeks or longer. Many employers recognize the strengths that qualified, long-term unemployed individuals can bring to their companies' success. These and other companies are also partnering with the public workforce system and other public and private organizations to implement human resources strategies that leverage the talents of the long-term unemployed.

Employer practices and strategies include:

- Acknowledge the talents and value of the long-term unemployed
- Outreach and recruitment strategies
- Applicant review and hiring approaches
- Onboarding strategies

Work-based models can be an effective strategy to help the long-term unemployed return to work. On-the-job training (OJT) and Registered Apprenticeship are the most common models for combining work experience with training and skills development. ETA continues to encourage and invest in work-based models.

Public and private organizations and agencies have identified unique barriers facing the long-term unemployed and have incorporated specialized service strategies to address them. Such strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Intensive assessment and customized service tracks
- Financial counseling and repair services
- Behavioral health counseling and support
- Enhanced job search assistance

These practices are currently being implemented in certain states and local areas by the public workforce system and through ETA-funded programs.

One of the ongoing challenges in assisting the long-term unemployed has been recruiting, engaging, and enrolling these job seekers in services. In many cases, these individuals may not actively seek out services from the public workforce system or other providers, due to the stigma associated with long-term unemployment, low self-esteem, or other reasons. A recent survey found that only 9 percent of the long-term unemployed reported receiving help from a government agency when they were looking for a job and only 4 percent say they were enrolled in a government-funded training program. Several strategies for actively engaging long-term unemployed job seekers include:

- Coordination with state unemployment insurance (UI) programs
- Targeted recruitment through human services, income support, and community-based programs
- Prevention strategies

**Action**

**Required:**

ETA encourages the public workforce system and ETA grantees to share this TEN with partners, employers, and other interested stakeholders; to review the resources and promising practices referenced; and, where appropriate and feasible, to incorporate them into targeted service delivery strategies for the long-term unemployed and assist employers and other partners in using and implementing them.